

MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

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The /Kung extend the incest taboo to certain categories of persons outside the nuclear family because they hold that the relationships resemble the relationships of the nuclear family and that it would therefore be incestuous to unite them in marriage. A man will say explicitly that he must not marry this or that woman because it would be 'like' marrying his mother, daughter, or sister. 582 835

The sexual constraints required between persons to whom the immediate or the extended incest taboo applies find expression in the marriage regulations and, in a secondary way, I believe, in certain avoidances which express constraint, namely: 602 835
(1) Sexual joking and sexual insults, which are permitted between persons who have the joking relationship and must be avoided by others. (2) A sitting taboo. The same persons who must avoid sexual joking must also avoid sitting close to each other or to each other's family fires—with two exceptions, namely: (a) parents and offspring, who must never make sexual jokes but who do not at any age observe the sitting taboo; and (b) all young children, including siblings. The /Kung believe that the persons who must observe the sitting taboo should not allow their genital organs to touch the same spot. No great distance need separate these persons when they sit. About 18 inches is a minimum but is sufficient. The taboo is applied without sex differentiation: men must not sit near men or women, or women near women or men if they do not have the joking relationship. (3) With the exception of siblings of any age, the same persons who avoid joking avoid using each other's names in direct address. They use a kin term instead or the men may use a respect term for each other—*!nan*, 'old man'. (4) Brothers and sisters do not sit near each other when they reach adolescence and, after marriage, when they have dwelling-places of their own, do not enter each other's scherms (shelters). (5) Parents and SoWi and DaHu, in addition to observing the joking, sitting, and name avoidances, do not enter each other's scherms and do not speak to each other in the first few years of their affinal relationship. They are the only persons in /Kung society who must avoid speaking together. After three children have been born, this avoidance is eased somewhat. In-laws may then speak occasionally; once in two or three days would be considered permissible. This interesting avoidance, so varied in intensity and so widely spread in human societies, appears in /Kung society to afford whatever benefits it has without imposing great hardship at any time. A daughter-in-law may lean her scherm upon her husband's parents' scherm and build her fire only about four or five feet away, and what she wants to say to her parents-in-law she says aloud to her husband or child and her parents-in-law overhear and respond in like manner. A son-in-law also could communicate in this way. I think only a /Kung or an informed observer would know that the in-laws were not speaking directly to each other. 593 606

The symbolism or expression of sexual constraint which underlies the joking and sitting avoidances is also observable in the modesty of these people. I believe that their modesty is not obedience to a specific taboo, like the sitting taboo, but is a more general response to being constantly in the presence of persons to whom the incest taboo applies, before whom any expression of sex would be improper. The general demeanour of the /Kung is modest. The dancing, if it gives any expression at all to sexuality or eroticism, conveys it with such restraint and delicacy as to be in extreme contrast to the dancing of the neighbouring Bantu tribes. Both men and women among the /Kung are exceedingly modest about exposing their genital 834 831

MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

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Approved marriages

No marriages are compulsory in /Kung society.

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Marriage is allowed with anyone to whom the incest taboo is not extended—with three degrees of approval: preference, permission, and toleration. Once a marriage has taken place, no differentiation in status is made.

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The joking relationship is the differentiating factor between the preference and mere permission which the society accords. In preferred marriages the man and woman are name relatives who have had the joking relationship before marriage and have applied to each other the terms /*gu/na* and *tūn*. This makes the marriage seem altogether right.

Marriage is permitted between name relatives who apply the terms *tsu* and /*ga* to each other and avoided joking before marriage, provided the incest taboo is not specifically extended to them; and, in the same way, marriage is permitted between name relatives who apply to each other the terms /*go*, brother, and /*kwi*, sister.

Marriage is tolerated, though rarely experienced, as I mentioned before, with persons to whom the name relationship and the application of kin terms is not extended; i.e. persons of other races, persons of other Bushman language groups, or other /Kung outside the region.

To contract a marriage with someone with whom one must not joke brings in a touch of the anomalous which deprives the /Kung of the perfect symmetry and consistency which so content them and make them feel secure in rightness. This society tolerates the anomaly, for obviously it must not forbid marriage in too many categories, and adjusts the joking status by giving to man and wife the joking relationship as soon as marriage takes place.

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Though neither the sororate nor the levirate is compulsory, marriage is highly approved with the wife of a deceased brother or the husband of a sister. A man is expected to take care of his BrWi should she need his care, even though he is not required to marry her. Marriage with a WiSi or HuBr is also highly approved. Ego has had the joking relationship with these affines.

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A marriage arrangement which the /Kung consider especially good is called /*oa ku*. This means that an exchange is made between two bands: a boy and girl from one marry a girl and boy from the other. /*Oa ku* is not a common practice. Bands as units have no authority in the arrangements of marriages, which is the duty of the parents, as we shall describe presently, and parents do not make the exchange between bands a major factor in their choices. If it happens to come about, however, the people are glad because each band thereby gains a person to replace the person lost and the bonds between the bands are strengthened.

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Polygynous marriages

Polygyny is the ideal form of marriage among the /Kung. This is not a society in which prestige and wealth concentrate to give certain categories of men more power or right than others to acquire wives. Headmen and medicine men are held in esteem but their positions do not in themselves entitle them to have extra wives or give them special dispensations. Wealth tends to be fairly well equalized. Everyone carries his or her own artifacts, the men on carrying-sticks over their shoulders, the women

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MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

- 185 polygyny affords women—that none remain long without the support of a husband.
595 They just said they did not want to be second wives, nor did they want their husbands to take second wives, and protests and quarrels attended a husband's proposal to do so.

Marriage by capture

- 583 Marriage by capture was spoken of fairly frequently by the /Kung in conversation. Elizabeth Marshall Thomas and I questioned a number of informants about it and we are convinced that wives are not actually acquired by this means at present. Perhaps they were in the past. The /Kung are a present-oriented people who make
[181] no concerted or consistent effort to retain their history and teach it to their children, and we obtained no significant data on their past customs. Nowadays the idea of capturing wives appears to be enjoyed by the men as a fantasy. The remarks of one /Gaishay illustrate what I mean. He weighs, at a good guess, about ninety pounds and looks like a miniature Mephistopheles. With a gleam he told me that if he wanted to take another wife he would go to her werf, seize her, throw her over his shoulder and run off with her. That is the way Bushmen do, he said, and he wished I could see him do so. I also wished that I could.

Arrangements for marriage

- 584 First marriages are arranged by the parents of the bride and groom, and second marriages also if the couple are still young. Adults, when both have been married before, may contract subsequent marriages themselves.
[611] Although there is a slight paternal emphasis in this society which recognizes bilateral descent, and the father names all his children, his authority is not clearly
[593] dominant over the mother's in the choice of a mate for their child. By and large, it appears that the father and mother talk things over and come to agreement. If they do not agree, it appears that the strength of personality of one or the other, the opinions of relatives, and various circumstances have weight in the decision.
Either the parents of the boy or those of the girl may take the initiative and go to the other parents with the proposal. A go-between is not required, though it is possible that a friend will sometimes act as such. The parents visit and talk, and, if they all agree, the arrangement is thereby settled upon. They normally give each other gifts in honour of the occasion.
Property does not enter much into the consideration of the parents in arranging marriages for their children. No property settlement is made, no bride-price paid, no dower given, though at the time of the wedding a few gifts are exchanged.
Food and water must, one imagines, weigh in the parents' thinking when a marriage is being arranged, and may sometimes be a determining factor. However, there is a considerable amount of equalization in these supplies. Veldkos¹ and water-holes
423 are not owned by individuals but by headmen for their bands, in a way I shall describe in a paper on bands. In the Nyae Nyae region each band has access to a supply, else the people would be dead or somewhere else, and things balance out in

¹ Veldkos (field food) is an Afrikaans word used to refer to any kind of wild plant material which people gather to eat. Edible fruits, seeds, roots, tubers, leaves, all are included.

MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

584 Boys are always considerably older than girls before their parents betroth them.
[805] We never knew the precise age of a /Kung because they reckon time from one season to the next, not in years, and do not keep track of a person's age by any measurement. Boys appear to be usually around twelve to fourteen or fifteen before they are betrothed. At this age their fathers begin to take them on the long hard hunts for the big animals which supply the people's meat and begin their serious hunting training. [868]
[883] As to girls, wives are in such demand in this polygynous society that the parents of boys have their eyes upon every girl baby and may say to the parents of an unborn infant, 'If it is a girl, let us have her for our son.' It seems to be more usual, however, to betroth the girls when they are about two to five or six. The boys wait patiently for long years for their fiancées to grow up.

We wondered what would happen if, when the time at last came for the marriage, the boy or girl should refuse the parents' choice. It appears that they seldom do. A boy is usually too eager to get a wife. To refuse the betrothed might mean he would have to wait for years and years again for a girl baby to grow up. The girls are usually too young to protest but it sometimes happens that one does. /Kung parents are exceedingly protective and permissive with their children, and delight in them, especially in their infancy. I have sometimes seen an older child scolded or snapped at by an impatient mother but I never saw a child severely punished. No hard work and few, if any, regular chores are demanded of dependent children. The same protectiveness and permissiveness were apparent in parents' lenience with respect to their girls' betrothals. They complied with the girls' wishes.

582 The marriage may take place when the parents agree. The age of the young people varies greatly. For the girl, there are no definite age or other requirements. The girl need not, for instance, show physical signs of maturity. When the important Ceremony of First Menstruation is performed, the girl may have been married for years. Bau, who was married to Tsamgao in 1951, did not have her first child for six years. /Nai was married to /Gunda in May 1953. She menstruated for the first time in March 1959. To be married as young as that is not at all unusual, but we have known several girls to be somewhat older.

582 The parents explain that when the girls marry young they 'get used to' their husbands. I am sure there is a great deal in this and I am sure it strongly affects the relations of husbands and wives, but I had insufficient opportunity to observe eight- or nine-year-old brides with teen-age husbands, and insufficient means, through interpreters, to grasp the nature of their relationship. What is the young husband like to a girl child? The friendly, gentle old man, Demi, said to me, 'They enjoy their youth together.'

593 The young couples are expected not to have sexual intercourse till the girls are 'big enough', informants said, and the boys must not force the girls. If a girl complained to her parents and the parents took her back and sent the young husband away, he might have to wait for years again for another bride to grow up. The /Kung are prevented by their incest taboos and their modesty from speaking freely about sex and I learned nothing about the actual sexual practices of the young couples. /Nai and her young husband, /Gunda, had only one good kaross between them; they slept together bundled in it, feet to feet. Bau and Tsamgao slept quite apart—at different fires—when we observed them in 1952. In 1953 they slept at their own fire, apart, she
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MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

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inside the scherm, he outside. Apparently no social rules pattern their sleeping. Individual adjustments are made.

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The boys must before they marry have proved themselves to be hunters and must have had performed over them the most important ceremony in the life of a /Kung boy—the Ceremony of the First Killing. The killing of birds or small animals does not qualify him for the ceremony; the animal he kills must be one of the great antelopes or a giraffe or buffalo, any one of the large animals killed for meat. When the boy himself has killed one of these, he is ceremonially scarified by his father or by another kinsman if his father is dead. The ceremony is performed twice for each boy. For the first male animal he is scarified on his right side and for the first female on his left side. Charred meat and fat, turned to magic by the ceremony, are rubbed into the several lines of vertical cuts on his face, arms, back, and chest to give him the will to hunt, good sight, and accurate aim; also to enable him to find the animal and to protect him from being seen by the animal. The ceremony is both a solemn celebration and a magic force to increase and strengthen the boy's power to hunt. It also carries with it the right to marriage and attests the boy's readiness.

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Marriage does not necessarily follow immediately upon this ceremony; years may elapse, but the way is prepared and readiness is proved. And once more the act of hunting is ceremonially linked with marriage. At the time of the wedding, the boy must bring to his bride's parents an animal that he himself has killed. The animal he brings must not be eaten by the bride.

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A boy who never killed any large meat animal would not be given a wife, informants said. This was why the strange old deviant, /Gaishay, had remained a bachelor. For reasons no one understood he could not hunt; he gathered veldkos like a woman. Gossip had it that twice he had tried to drag a woman against her will into his scherm but had not succeeded. Informants remarked, 'Women like meat.' They do, but there is far more to it than that.

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As John Marshall shows in his film, *The Hunters*, the primary sources of physical life, sex and food, are involved. In /Kung concept they are linked together, and, as they pertain to men, their duality is lifted to oneness in the being of the man, who is the sexually powerful male and the provider, the hunter. Power as a man and a male and worthiness and dignity are associated with hunting and not with the failure to hunt.

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Since they are related, both the sexual and the hunting powers of the young man can be captured at once with a bride. For the first several years of marriage the boy goes to live with his bride's parents, or her people, should her parents be dead, to hunt for them. The parents of girls speak constantly of wanting their sons-in-law to provide them with food as though it were an obsession. 'We are old', they say, or 'We shall soon be old' [whether this is actually true or not]; we need a young man to hunt for us'; 'our daughter's husband must get us something to eat'; 'we need karosses'; 'we want meat'—these are their refrains.

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Another value the /Kung place upon the boy's hunting during his bride-service appears in their belief that if the husband hunts for his wife and feeds her while she is still a growing child she becomes the more his. Food seems to be a main concern in bride-service, but the people also say that they want to be sure that the boy measures up in every way and will take good care of their daughter, and that the girl will have time to get used to her husband.

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MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

585 then come with us when we leave tomorrow to gather *tsi*. He will hunt from that
 [159] place and get us some meat.
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The ritual elements in the wedding ceremony, in so far as we observed, were as follows: (1) carrying the bride so that her feet do not touch the ground; (2) covering her head so that the sun does not shine upon it; (3) waiting till the sun has set before taking her to the wedding scherm; (4) the fact that the scherm is specially built and set apart from the others; (5) anointing with fat; (6) painting a design on the forehead and cheeks with powdered red stone; (7) lighting the wedding fire with brands from the fires of the bride's and groom's parents.

585 Apart from the third and seventh, all these elements occur also in the Ceremony of
 881 the First Menstruation, a more elaborate and prolonged ceremony from which the
 [174] /Kung wedding ceremony undoubtedly derives. The design on the face is the same; the girl's feet must not touch the ground from the instant her first menstruation begins to the end of the period, when she is washed and anointed with both eland or other fat and the oil of the *tsi* (*Bauhinia esculenta* Burch).¹ When the girl is taken to her special scherm or moved out of it to urinate or defecate she is carried on the back of a kinswoman. A kaross over her head shields her from the sun whether she is sitting in the scherm or being carried out.

Our endeavour to bring to light the meaning of the ritual elements yielded little. The meaning or origin of the design on the face, I was convinced, was not withheld but lost to memory, lore or myth. 'It is our custom' was all the people could tell me.

[171] About the ritual of the feet not touching the ground, the custom frequently observed by divine kings and menstruating girls, the /Kung had no more illumination. They think that the carrying is the overcoming of the girl's symbolized modesty about going to the arms of her bridegroom, which she should properly feign even if she is eager to go, and her reluctance to separate from her own family: I think that when the attendants take hold of the bride and groom by the arm and pull them a little they symbolize the overcoming of reluctance and modesty and perhaps there is even a vestige of bride capture in that gesture, but of the feet not touching the ground the meaning is lost. Obviously, however, in this society the bride is equated to the menstruating girl. In the past the girl's wedding and her first menstruation may have been celebrated at one time.

585 The /Kung say that the sun is death-giving. When the three months of life-
 821 giving rains are past, the sun dries up the water pools. It kills the fresh leaves and fruits, dries the roots and berries, and would scorch the people if they did not find shade and dig shallow pits and lie in them covered lightly with sand which they have moistened with their urine for coolness. They pity the morning star, the *kuli* /gaishay, which crosses the sky all day ahead of the sun, has no branches to carry for shade and cannot turn aside to rest under a tree. The sun is a 'death thing' and the bride is shielded from it.

593 The most important element of behaviour with respect to kinship in the wedding
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[113] ¹ Robert Story, *Some Plants Used by the Bushmen in Obtaining Food and Water*, Department of Agriculture, Division of Botany, Union of South Africa, Botanical Survey, Memoir No. 30, 1958, p. 25.

Dr. Story was a member of the 1955 and 1957 expeditions. We gratefully acknowledge whatever botanical identifications we mention as his.

MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

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ceremony is the avoidance of the parents, which is symbolic of the incest taboo. Any (preferably young) kinswoman who is tall enough and strong enough, whether she herself is married or not, and whether or not she has the joking relation with the bride, may carry the bride; and any may attend her. Only the mother absolutely must not do so.* Likewise the groom's father must not attend him. Neither pair of parents go to sit by the wedding fire, for they must not sit near their son's wife or daughter's husband, nor speak to them. Guests of mature years might go and sit by the wedding fire only if they have the joking relationship with both the bride and the groom. Very young guests, such as we saw at /Nai's and /Gunda's fire, may go, whether they joke or not with the bride and groom, because the avoidances are not stringently observed with young children.

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602*Termination of marriage and remarriage*

Widows and widowers are not avoided in any special way because of their widowhood.

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If her husband dies, a young widow usually returns to her own parents or lives with one of her own siblings, but, if her people are dead, or if it is her preference, she may stay on with her deceased husband's people. It is the duty of her HuBr to hunt for her if she needs his support.

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Several possibilities are open to a young widower: rarely he might stay with his deceased wife's parents or siblings; more likely he would return to his own parents or siblings; and, when he marries again, he goes into matrilocal residence with the new bride. In any case, a man is responsible for his wife's parents and young siblings, and, if they depended on him for support, he would take them with him. They would be likely to prefer, however, to live with an adult son, daughter, or sibling of their own if they had any.

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Old widowers or widows whose own parents are dead usually live with either a son or daughter, or perhaps with their own sibling—as they wish.

The surviving spouse is free to marry again within the regulations of the extended incest taboo, which applies to all marriages.

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Parents would arrange the subsequent marriage of a widowed boy or girl. Adults may make their own arrangements directly. My impression was that persons might be considered fully adult somewhere in their middle or late twenties.

An adult man takes the initiative and asks the woman to marry him. Robert Dyson in the 1951 expedition learned that one way for a man to ask a woman to marry him is to present her with a bow and arrow. If she accepts it she indicates her willingness to consider his suit.

No restriction of time is put upon the remarriage of a widower, but a widow should not remarry until one rainy season has passed. She is then considered 'clean' and may marry again. ≠Toma said, 'The rain washes (//num) the death away from the widow.' //Num is the gesture of wiping a dish with one finger and then licking the finger. /Ti/kay of Band 9 said that some men wait for a rainy season to pass, but that others would be pleased the husband was dead and, without waiting, say, 'This is my chance.' One interpreter understood that the widow had to take off her kaross and spend a night out, letting the rain fall on her, but ≠Toma said this was not what

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MARRIAGE AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

562 into its heart. Back in the werf, while the meat was being cut up and distributed by
[462] /Qui's wife's brothers, he slept exhausted on the mound of black and white plumes
[224] and the women, some of the plumes in their hair, danced a dance of praise around
him. This is the role of /Kung men and the way it should be.

157 By comparison with the men, the women are considerably more circumscribed in
562 knowledge, less ready for new experience, more suspicious and apprehensive of
strangers. They draw back and seem on the whole somewhat timid. The men protect
them in many ways. They would not let the women ride with us in the truck, for
instance, unless some of the men were with them.

The women expect the dependent role. They have their say in conversation but
do not take part in the serious conclaves of the men, saying often, 'The men know
these things. We do not know. The men must decide.' And one woman said, 'A man
can do everything—shoot and make fire.' /Kung women are encouraged to be
compliant by the fact that, in their love of peace, the /Kung like quiet, modest,
gentle women. Overbearing, strident, demanding, or nagging women would disturb
not only their own husbands but the whole werf. Disapproval of anyone's behaviour
[626] is expressed by the group in talk, and also by songs, such as the song of *The Two*
Baus, which was composed about two loudly quarrelsome co-wives. When the two
Baus heard this song strummed on the *//guashi* or hummed here and there in the
shadows of the werf at night, they mended their ways.

562 Though the /Kung like gentleness and compliance in women, their society does
not impose extreme forms of obedience or subservience upon them and women are
not ill treated. One man told Laurence Marshall that if he wanted to go somewhere
and his wife wanted to go somewhere else he might have to talk, talk, talk, talk, talk,
talk to persuade her.

562 We once saw a woman strike her husband on the head with her digging-stick in
593 a fit of frustration because he had coerced her to go with him when she wanted to
remain visiting her parents. He had coerced her swiftly and decisively by snatching
her baby from her arms and walking ahead with it. In a flash the wife ran a few steps
and hit him, then she went around in a circle, stamping her feet in great, high stamps
like an enraged samurai in a Japanese print, then she followed her husband. I personally
never saw a /Kung man hit a woman. This is not to say no /Kung ever did,
but it is far from common.

The dominance of the /Kung men is more protective and life-giving than crushing
to the women. On the whole a good balance seems to be attained and there is a
notable freedom from quarrelling between husbands and wives. The instances of
strife that we have mentioned are exceptional breaks in the usual peace of their well-
adjusted human relations.

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841 The water and food collected by menstruating women are consumed only by the women themselves and old people; the younger ones "it makes weak."

● 593 The authority of the parents practically ceases as soon as
858 the children are in a position to provide food for themselves.

553 A child is named soon after birth by the grandfather or grandmother (whether on the paternal or the maternal side was not determined).

145 Boys reach puberty between 14 and 16 years of age and girls between 13 and 15 years of age (estimates).

881 The declaration of a boy's maturity is a special event in the life of the Bushman. Under the leadership of the "doctor," several youths from neighboring settlements march into the bush and live together there for some weeks on the veld crop. During this time they receive some sort of instruction in secret affairs. Young and old Auen alike, whom I interrogated separately, denied that this instruction pertains to sexual matters. To the question of what they did during their stay in the bush, I always received the answer: "They dance." They did, indeed, describe for me a kind of dance which decidedly has something childishly mysterious about it. A boy seats himself "piggyback" on the back of another, and both wrap themselves in a large hide mantle. The dance consists of the carrier tramping with his feet as rapidly as possible without moving forward, while both of them utter a low "hu, hu" in as horrifying a manner as possible.

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It is indeed difficult to imagine that this interesting occupation should last for weeks, interrupted only by sleeping and eating.

In addition, the young people seem to be treated quite badly in the course of this preparation and to receive little to eat; all of them concurred in the opinion that it is "miserable."

I learned through hints that the candidates for manhood play all kinds of tricks on neighboring villages during the night and play as "ghosts" a bit, as well as stealing food.

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The actual attainment of manhood, after which the boys are warriors and are allowed to marry, is not solely dependent on attending the preparation, but also on the killing of the first piece of big game.

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Tattooing is not connected with the official attainment of manhood

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157 them thought of asking a question about it. The Bushmen of today at least do not believe that any kind of magic is concealed

[177] in the Europeans' machines. They learn to use European instruments fairly quickly; in particular, they soon become familiar with the rifle. Dornan reported that there was a large number of improvised rifles that the Bushmen had adapted. In a new environment, the Bushman is wholly self-possessed and coolly

[648] observant. He is highly adaptable. The girls, of whom a number are kept by farmers as concubines, are quite skillful at housekeeping. In Ovamboland they quickly adopt the living

[177] habits and economic activities of the Bantu. An Ongandjera Bushman acts as an instructor at the teacher's college in Oonipa. He owns a small kraal that is well-maintained in Ovambo fashion and, in addition, has built himself a round hut of tiles in which

[648] he keeps his "library." They seldom stay long on the farms, but [147] probably in the main because the food does not agree with them.

609 The Bushmen are most distrustful of other people. Every armed person whom they encounter is regarded from the outset as an enemy. The Bushman is allowed to enter the regions of other tribes

only if he is unarmed. Even along the edge of the farm zone the mutual distrust is so great that a Bushman who has been sent to a farm as a messenger dares not leave the road, which is regarded as a neutral zone, if another kin group has settled in the vicinity. If two armed Bushmen who are strangers approach each other, they disarm at first sight before they greet each other. When a Bushman comes to a village or to a farmhouse, he will put down his arms at a certain distance and sit down to wait patiently, if need be for hours, until he is questioned. A

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609 distinct sense of race is not apparent. Everything that does not belong to one's own kin group is regarded as strange, even hostile, except when common persecution causes a sense of solidarity to spring up among all those who are persecuted. At the same time, they very clearly possess a kind of sense of humanity as a whole, that is, they do not believe that they are the only people, and they are convinced, for example, that the people of all races are received in the heavenly house. Their conduct toward relatives is regulated by numerous customs, but in general it is formal and almost ceremonial, even toward the

602 wife and children. The Bushman is never importunate.

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114 without compromising oneself. Only old people are suitable
124 informants, since they are no longer eager for renown.

831 In view of the hard life that the people lead, sexuality, naturally, is not excessively developed. Perverse manipulations are evidently unknown, since my informants did not even understand questions on this subject.

833 Normal sexual intercourse is usually performed in the bush during the time between the evening meal and the rising
271 of the moon. Long periods of thirst result in almost total im-
147 potency.

157 Despite all the formality, they have an unbridled
578 temperament which frequently expresses itself in violent emotional explosions over trivial affairs, which then may easily lead to serious consequences since the poisoned arrow is always at hand. For example, I was told the following story: A Bushman worked on a farm for quite a long time and, with his belly fat from eating maize, came to visit his thin companions. His brother made fun of him for being so fat, saying that he could not run any more, whereupon the fat one retorted: "Just the same, I'll live longer than you." After this brief exchange of words, the scrawny brother stabbed the fat one. -- A film company once wanted to make a film among the !Kung who are settled behind Keibeb; the film was to be called: "When the First Whites Came into the Land." The chief of this horde had a [23] pair of old German military trousers as an emblem of his office and when he was requested to take them off, he responded with the declaration that he would take off his trousers only if the White did the same, whereupon he received a box on the ears that put him and his companions in such a rage that the film company preferred to depart in order to avoid a catastrophe.

157 That they can also be quick at repartee is shown by the following story which was repeatedly told to me by Europeans: A Bushman had been accused of poaching. The magistrate asked him: "Don't you know that these animals belong to the king (royal game)?" The Bushman answered: "I saw no 'brand' (property mark)."

● [593] As a chief or family head, the Bushman is bossy and unyielding, which is understandable in view of the rigidity of his whole conception of life. The sick Bushmen lie silent and

!Kung

[23 cont.]

105 and in the beyond by his traditional conceptions, and the preserva-
 182 tion of this adaptation, in the spiritual as well as in the material
 realm, is achieved by means of a strict selection of all the cul-
 tural goods offered from the outside. This selection is consciously
 carried out. Put briefly: the Bushmen have hitherto refused higher
 (177) economic forms not because they do not possess the ability to
 handle them, but because they did not want to adopt them. If the
 material preconditions collapse, then they adopt, step by step or
 all at once, totally different ways of life, as is shown by their
 Bantuization in Ovamboland and probably also by the formation
 of the Hottentot people through the adoption of livestock raising
 on the part of a number of Bushman tribes. Their average intelli-
 (153) gence is no less than that of any other race. Every Bushman knows
 (184) the entire spiritual heritage of his tribe.

Of the same Bushmen, F. Schinz (2) says:

[113]

2. F. Schinz, Deutsch-Südwestafrika,
 Leipzig, 1891.

181

"The Bushman is always faithful to his master and will
 follow him anywhere without pay; one need not worry about
 leaving him alone at the wagon and will rarely have to reprimand
 him for dishonesty. All travelers and hunters unanimously praise
 (593) the great affection that exists between parents and children, which
 goes so far that the father or mother will sacrifice themselves in
 order to save their child. I was told [24] by the hunter L. that at
 the Okovango he once witnessed a scene in which a young Bush-
 man, who was one of the members of the hunting expedition, was
 in danger of being trampled to death by an angry elephant that
 stormed toward him. At the last moment when his paralyzed com-
 panions had already given the boy up for lost, his father sprang
 forth and flung his throwing club at the forehead of the enormous
 animal. The elephant now turned against his new attacker and
 furiously crushed him under his feet, giving the son the opportunity
 to flee."

[114]

My observations are fully in accord with those of Dornan (1)

[113]

1. Dornan, Pygmies and Bushmen of the
Kalahari, London, 1925.

[24 cont.]

181 He states:

181 "It has been asserted that the Bushmen have no feeling for
593 one another. I have frequently heard it said that the mothers are cruel to their children and occasionally kill them when their burden becomes too great. As far as I can see, this is untrue. I have frequently seen Bushman mothers kiss their little ones, exactly as European women do, and when the children are ill, they go to all kinds of trouble. The fathers, it is true, are frequently gruff and rough, but never brutal to their children. The girls are usually seen in company with their mothers, the boys with the men. Between mother and daughter there is an intimate relationship of trust. It has also been asserted that Bushmen are ungrateful; this is also quite untrue. They show their feeling of gratitude neither to one another nor to the Whites, but anyone who gains their trust through kindness can tell that they are indeed grateful. They show their gratitude not by words but by deeds. If someone is in need or in distress and a Bushman friend is in the vicinity, the latter will stay by him to the bitter end."

[124] The !Kung Bushman in particular is much more a rational than a sentimental person. The extraordinary difficulty that he encounters in obtaining his livelihood makes him extremely independent in his thinking. It was surprising to see the sureness with which not only men but women, too, were able to act as interpreters. Whereas among the Bantu it is difficult to keep the conversation on the subject, the Bushman always sticks to the point. Even the tribal traditions, insofar as superstitious conceptions are concerned, are not safe from the skepticism of the individual. For instance, I once asked a number of Bushmen whether they hunt lions. They answered in the negative, and when I said that this was probably because the lions harbored the spirits of eminent deceased Bushmen, they laughed and said that this was just a tale of the Hei//om Bushmen and some Bushman doctors who had learned this from them. Other men of the same tribe, on the other hand, were firmly convinced that the spirits of great Bushmen doctors reside in the lions.

181 There are also many stories about bush spirits, especially in
771 the Otjimpolo Veld. My informants repeatedly observed, however, that they did not know whether there was any truth in them, because they had never seen any.

[29 cont.]

847 child live, the older child would have to die. We are left with the choice of killing one of the children so that one can stay alive. The explanation is absolutely convincing. There is the
 [593] added consideration that the Bushman mothers lose their maternal instincts when they see that a child is not thriving. I saw a six-month-old Bushman child, a really pitiful figure. The mother did not have sufficient food for her child. My wife offered to give the child the bottle. The proposal was joyfully accepted. For a few days, the child was brought at the specified times. It gladly took the bottle. But then the mother felt that her freedom was restricted. After all, she had to remain in the vicinity of the house for the sake of the child. She did not lack food at all. I provided for her. The desire for veldkost was too great, however, and the child was brought only in the morning and evening and received his meal. Naturally, no noticeable improvement could be observed. Hence, at an opportune occasion the mother disappeared, and when she reappeared, she was without the child. She and her friends had buried it alive."

853 Matters are certainly not always as hopeless as Vedder describes them. First of all, at a very early age the children are given pre-chewed veldkost, and, secondly, the women of the kin group help one another out with the breast feeding. During
 854 the day the infant stays in a hide sack on the mother's back, and at night the children sleep at the mother's breast; the smallest lies directly at the breast, while during the cold season the others
 867 cuddle around the mother's legs. From earliest childhood, the children are taught to honor the old people and not to take anything away from anyone. For the boys, the father soon carves a bow and arrow, for the girls a little digging stick. Nothing is said to little children when they take things, but once the boy has been given a bow, he may not touch anyone else's bow and arrow; otherwise he gets a beating. The boys greatly fear the women.
 868 The bigger boys stay together by themselves and go hunting for
 857 small game or accompany adults on the hunt for large game.

586 Marriage is absolutely indissoluble. Separation is also impossible, for outside the kin group the woman would perish in the wilderness. So far as I have observed, the relationship between
 593 marriage partners is in general very good, and not uncommonly the

[29 cont.]

- 593 men are strongly influenced by their wives. It practically never
 [562] happens that a man beats his wife. Monogamy [30] is the rule.
- 595 I know of one single case of a man having two sisters as wives. It
 is true that certain marriage laws frequently force the men to
 marry considerably older girls. It is therefore understandable that
 in such circumstances the desire for a younger life's companion
 frequently arises, but the consent of the first wife is absolutely
 necessary. It is said: "He who has a good wife may have several;
 he who has a bad one must be content with her alone." The Bush-
- 842 men do not know any means of preventing pregnancy, and, accord-
- 843 ingly, very soon after marriage the young wife will find herself
 with child. The husband and his sisters-in-law must see to it that
 she eats no sour veld fruit, nothing sweet, and no fat meat. No
 one is allowed to walk behind the pregnant woman's back; no pot
 is supposed to be put on the fire until the woman has been rubbed
 with the soot of the pot; she is not supposed to sit where the other
- 844 people are, but must stay to one side. When the time for delivery
 approaches, she must step over the legs of her husband, who has
 rubbed medicine into incisions in his calves. When the woman
 feels that the birth pangs are beginning, she goes into the bush by
 herself and looks for veldkost. She is not supposed to sit down while
 doing so, because that would have harmful effects on the birth.
 Then she picks grass, prepares a place under a tree, puts her bag
 of veldkost to one side, and gives birth to the child in a squatting
 position, grasping a branch with her hands. Then she takes the
 child, severs the umbilical cord herself, puts it in her veldkost bag,
 and goes home with it. The cord is always severed with a quartz
 knife (as among the Dama). The umbilical cord (!nm) is buried.
 Only women who are unafraid and who have already given birth to
 one child follow this procedure. A woman who is giving birth for
 the first time and is afraid does not go into the veld, but stays at
 home. As soon as the pains begin, she weeps and goes out, sits
 down, and stands up again. Older women of the kin group accom-
- pany her, and in their presence the child is finally born inside the
 hut. The men may not be present. Children, too, may not look
 on, and if they creep up out of curiosity, they are soundly thrashed.
- [845] If there are difficulties, the abdomen is massaged. Von Zastrow

! KUNG

[31 cont.]

582 unmarried. Marriage is concluded at an early age. The age that
165 Bushmen attain is not great. There are relatively few old people
among them, although some of them, it is true, attain a very
● 593 high age. The children must obey their parents even when they
are grown up and married.

888 The Bushmen indignantly denied that they kill the old people or expose them in the bush. If someone is old, weak, or ill, then they simply walk more slowly or leave the sick person behind with a companion. My informants did report to me that during periods of extreme thirst not only old people, but also women and children who were unable to move on were left behind. This happened only in desperate circumstances, when those who were half-dead from thirst could not be helped in any case and a stay would have resulted in death for the whole kin group. As soon

[731] as someone has died, all the women and girls sit around the corpse and weep. There is no singing on this occasion. Then some of the men go and dig a grave in the bush, cut off medium-sized pieces of wood, and place these in the bottom of the grave as a foundation, over which is spread the hay that the deceased was lying on. Then all take the body to the grave and bury it in a crouched position with the back toward the sunrise. Every relative must give a few glass beads and ornaments if the deceased is a woman. This finery is placed around the neck of the deceased. The corpse is rubbed down with green aromatic powder and ocher and is wrapped in its hides and blankets. They either throw thorn on the covered grave or make a four-cornered gutter in the sand around the grave and posts are pounded into the gutter to make a fence. The grave is now in the center of the fence, like the living person in the center of his hut. A cup of water and some food are put near the head area. Deceased men have bows, arrows, and their hunting bag placed on the chest. Children are given their miniature bows. The Bushmen say that they give the bows and arrows not because the deceased needs them for hunting in the beyond, but because they do not want to use the effects of the deceased, whom they loved. According to Vedder (1), the dead

[42 cont.]

178 He died when his successor, Amme, was still a small boy. Amme,
622 however, was unable [43] to learn much from his father; he was
not a good chief, and he died while still young. Since then the
!Kung Bushmen have not had a supreme chief. One of my in-
formants, Doctor X'amme, claimed to be the great-grandson of
the great chief of the same name.

The following from Von Zastrow and Vedder (1) should

1. Op. cit., pp. 412, 424.

be mentioned:

593 "The father is the chief of the family. All must respect
596 him. Children may not call him by name. -- The chief's posi-
622

[276]



Fig. 15. Dacha Pipe of the !Kung Bushmen (from the
Lindenmuseum, Stuttgart, 29464).

tion is generally passed from father to son. If the son is not yet
an adult when his father dies, the father's younger brother takes
433 his place. Each kin group has a territory that has been inherited
614 from ancient times. The territory is called Gao and might corre-
spond to the German concept Gau [canton, district].

"There are kin groups that are so far apart that a journey
of several days lies between them. For example, the territory
north of the Omuramba-Owambo near Kajus, where the manketti
tree (Riciodendrum bantaneni) occurs, belongs to a kin group that
ordinarily lives over 100 kilometers away and comes there only
when the oleaginous fruit is ripe.

"Kin groups with two hunting and gathering regions come
into being through the fusion of two kin groups that have inter-
married for so long that fusion came about automatically.

[45 cont.]

164 [753] Dr. Kasi. The people died. Very evil dsao were involved. The
 [192] terminology for the description of the external genitalia is by no
 [302] means as rich as among the Bantu. The women's pubic hair is
 [543] usually plucked out by their husbands. Hence, it is called virgin
 842 hair. The connection [46] between cohabitation and pregnancy
 [757] is known. Impotence and sterility occur; there is no medicine
 [278] for them. When menstruation fails to occur, nothing special is
 841 done. The menstruating woman may only eat with her husband
 [757] and may not go around tasting food. A warm stone is placed on
 853 the stomach for menstrual pains. Children are nursed at least
 [826] until the birth of the next child. The nipples are distinguished
 164 by a leathery firmness. Nevertheless, mastitis does occur.

The contention that venereal diseases are very widespread is incorrect; as such they are even unknown to the Bushmen. In isolated cases I have met Bushmen on the farms with vestigial gonorrhea. Syphilis is very rare among the wild Bushman.

Skin Diseases

The wild Bushman scarcely knows anything about skin care.

[515] Since there is a lack of both water and fat, the skin, which as a rule feels silky, soft, warm, and dry, becomes cracked, and infections easily occur. A chronic eczema (gari), evidently caused by a fungus, is very widespread. To combat it, they use the milky
 [278] sap of a plant called timba.
 [757]

Hair Diseases

A nonmalignant hair disease that is very widespread among all the Bantu, causing the hair to fall out in roughly circular spots, is also found among the Bushmen. In addition, as among the Bushmen of Naukluft, the so-called "porcelain head" occurs, a disease that destroys the entire hair base, and the head gleams
 [145] like porcelain. The hair becomes gray relatively early. Loss of hair is rare; it usually occurs in the form of baldness characteristic of schizothymia. The rounded fingernails are worn fairly long; the toenails are often fissured.

30 THE KIN TERMINOLOGY SYSTEM OF THE /KUNG BUSHMEN

601 The sibling category is divided on the basis of sex. Ego jokes with a sibling of
 602 the same sex as his own and is prohibited from joking with a sibling of opposite
 [593] sex. This creates a 'cross' and 'parallel' pattern which is observed in the use of the
 terms, man-speaking and woman-speaking, among persons classified by name with
 siblings and among affines of the sibling category.

Sex is not the differentiating factor with respect to the joking relationship among
 groups of kin apart from siblings. All other consanguineous kin, affines, and name-
 relatives are grouped in the joking or non-joking dichotomy according to their
 categorical classification, as follows:

Ego has the joking relationship with anyone of either sex who is classified with
 himself or herself, to whom ego applies the term *lgu/na* (or *tun/ga* w.s.) or *tūn*. Con-
 sanguineous kin may be so classified by generation (i.e. cousins) as shown in Dia-
 gram 1, or by the factor of the name, i.e. the person for whom ego is named or persons
 named for ego. Ego has the joking relationship with grandparents and grandchildren
 unless the factor of the name places ego terminologically in the other, non-joking,
 607 division. Among affines, ego has the joking relationship with his or her spouse, and
 also with BrWi and WiSi, *tūn* m.s., and SiHu and HuBr, *tun/ga* w.s., who are all con-
 sidered suitable persons to marry. Ego may joke with affines termed *lumba* and *lundai*,
 who are in ego's generation terminologically as they are his offspring's spouses'
 parents. Persons named for any of the above affines would be termed *lgu/na* (or
tun/ga w.s.) or *tūn* by ego and ego could joke with them. He could joke also with any
 name-relatives to whom he applies these terms.

602 Joking is prohibited with parents and offspring of either sex and with anyone of
 either sex who is classified with them by being of the same generation, when the
 generational method of applying terms is used, or by being named for them, when
 the homonymous method of applying terms is used; or with name-relatives classified
 in this category. Joking is also prohibited with affines associated with this category,
 i.e. parents of spouse, and spouses of offspring. The terms which are associated with
 the non-joking status are the parent-child terms, and *tsu*, *lga* or *dilguma*, and the
 affinal terms, *≠tun*, *tun/ga* m.s. and *utsu*.

When informants were trying to explain the joking relationship to us they had an
 additional statement to make about the prohibition of joking. They said that, as they
 must not joke with their parents or offspring, in like manner they must not joke
 with a person and the offspring of that person. This concept is doubtless associated
 with the generational method of applying terms. It is not thought to be a contradic-
 tion or inconsistency to joke both with a person and the offspring of that person
 when the homonymous method of applying terms is followed. When a person is
 named for another his biological position is disregarded and he is terminologically
 classified with the person for whom he is named. The homonymous method is never
 applied nor the biological position disregarded in the nuclear family or among
 primary affines.

Joking, of course, is always reciprocal; if ego may joke with A, A may joke with
 ego. If B is named for A, the term which ego applies to B always has the same joking
 status as the term he applies to A. Ego's joking status is the same with both persons
 of a married couple (cf. p. 18), except in the case of name-relatives with whom he
 assumes his status individually (cf. p. 15).

- 372 *hei-doros*: The new *lou-ais* now serves to supply the other members of the group. At times it may happen that all the members of the community may not be living in the *//gāus* (camp), but in some outside werft. This is usually the case only in times of drought when the game have moved far afield and great difficulty is being experienced in obtaining veldkos.
- 372 Further, people driven out by another group and seeking protection are sometimes allowed to live some distance away from the *//gāus*. Such communities are not allowed to make their own fire or to obtain it from any other source, but the *lou-ais* of the *gei-khoib* in whose territory they are living.
- 372 Persistent ill-health among the members of the community or difficulty in obtaining veldkos or want of luck in the chase may cause the *gei-khoib*, either of his own accord or after consultation with his people, to proclaim that it is necessary to make a new fire. In such an event all fires, including the *lou-ais* are extinguished by being covered over with ashes. The *gei-khoib* at the same time notifies all outside camps of his decision and the latter likewise extinguish their fires. He then kindles a new *lou-ais* in front of his hut with the *hei-doros* and applies *norab* and *dabas* in the manner described above. The new fire is not made on the same spot as the old fire, but a few feet away from the place on which it had been.
- 184 The custom of kindling and maintaining a perpetual fire is met with among all the organised primitive groups. Want of space and time does not permit, however, of a detailed account being given of the superstitions which have gathered about this custom among the various tribes.

Family Life

- 593 Each family within the group occupies its own hut. Children sleep with their parents until they are strong enough to go about by themselves, when the boys join the others under the tree and the girls take up residence in the hut for unmarried girls.
- 512 The women rise early, light the fire and prepare the food for the morning meal which usually consists of veldkos. After having eaten, the men go out visiting or hunting or engage in some other occupation such as preparing skins, weapons, etc. The women accompany each other in search of veldkos and go out soon after the men have left. When food is obtainable at no great distance they are usually back in camp towards midday. When they have to go far they may not reach home until late in the afternoon. Wood is collected on their way back. Immediately after their return they proceed to prepare food, the younger married women and young girls in the meantime fetching water. The food is ready by the time the men arrive in the evening and the latter are able to partake of it without delay.
- 462 There is a sharp division of labour between the men and women of the group. The former do the hunting and snaring of game, prepare the weapons, skins for clothing, snares, fire-

- 606 his mother-law, it is necessary to speak to anybody in her hut, he will keep at a distance and depart as soon as he sees her approaching. They never refer to each other by name but always as "my son-in-law" or "my mother-in-law." The son-in-law does not associate with his father-in-law but similarly avoids him and should they meet accidentally they may exchange greetings but no general conversation will take place nor will they look each other in the face.
- 847 Abortion is sometimes practised early in pregnancy in the case of both married and unmarried women. It is procured by external manipulation of the uterus and not through the agency of drugs.
- 844 A pregnant woman is generally treated with great consideration. For the first confinement it is customary for her to return to her mother's group. Among the *Hei-//om* the labour is conducted in the camp. Among the more primitive Kalahari Bushmen the woman leaves the camp as soon as the first symptoms appear and is attended to by her mother or some other old woman underneath a tree some distance away. Tufts of grass are uprooted and placed upside down on the tree as a warning to men that a labour is in progress. The mother returns to the camp immediately after the birth of the child and for a week or more subsequently is relieved of such duties as gathering wood and veldkos, fetching water, etc. In the event of a mother dying during childbirth the infant is reared by the grandmother or by some friend who desires a child. When it cannot be disposed of in this manner
- 846 it is buried alive with the mother. Illegitimate births are not common among the primitive communities. When they do occur the children are usually put to death. Pregnancies
- 165 follow in rapid succession during the course of married life
- 847 but owing to the high mortality among infants caused by the strenuous conditions of life very few children survive. Further, among the Bushmen of the Kalahari child murder is practised. Children are suckled until they are able to walk well. If a new child is born while the last one is still on the breast it is buried alive in the nearest burrow or in a hole made for the purpose by the old woman who conducted the labour. When twins are born one is invariably killed.
- 845 It is for these reasons that it is rare to find families of five
- 162 or more children in the Kalahari. On an average only two or three children survive infancy and early childhood. Among the Bushmen of the Oschimpoloveld and Ovamboland larger families are met with. Brother and sister avoidance
- 845 is met with in some but not in all tribes. There is no special ceremony in connection with the naming of children. Among
- 553 the *Hei-//om* each child is generally given three names,
- 551 namely a first name, a second name and a surname. Names are not given by the parents. The first name may be given by the father's mother and the second name by the

The Bushmen

45

of the old women, Dasina, who was Tsetchwe's mother, in-⁶⁰⁹
 haled too deeply and began to faint. Tsetchwe half turned²⁷⁶
 her mother so that everyone would not see her, and, putting⁶²¹
 an arm around her for support, let the old woman lean on her
 shoulder. Our interpreter laughed, and Tsetchwe turned to
 glare. Tsetchwe's back was exactly like her mother's, broad
 but curved in at the waist, the old woman's a little bloated
 but Tsetchwe's young and strong.

Another old woman was smoking, too, puffing on a short,
 wide pipe cut from a leg bone of some large antelope, so big
 that she had to stuff one end with grass to keep the tobacco
 inside. She almost unhinged her jaw each time she puffed.
 She would inhale and spit, cough, and inhale again without
 a sign of dizziness, and when she saw Dasina faint she too
 laughed out loudly. Her name, she told us, was Twikwe.

Twikwe was skinny and tall as a man, with long, lanky¹⁴²
 arms that she flung about in the air, gesturing, and long legs¹⁵⁶
 that jerked when she walked. She wore only a short piece of⁵⁹³
 leather that reached from her waist to her thighs, and we⁶²¹
 could see that she was wrinkled from head to foot, her skin
 hanging in long, vertical wrinkles down her thighs and belly,
 like an old apple that has dried. She talked incessantly and
 loudly, always opening and closing her mouth, and she joked,
 for Ukwane and the young boys near her laughed at every-
 thing she said. She was telling how her husband had out-
 distanced her as they were running away and was surely run-
 ning still. Every now and then she stopped her talk to shout
 out to him, jeering, saying that he was depriving himself of
 tobacco and should come back; then everyone would listen,
 but no sound came from him, no answer. He never did come
 back, and in the weeks we were there we never saw him. Per-
 haps he was running away from Twikwe, for we later learned^[595]
 that he was living in a valley with his other wife.

The Fire

69

mediately down a hole. Gai continued treading in the half-⁵²²hearted hope of another mouse, with a disappointed, intent²²⁴ expression on his face because the first had escaped him. Witabe, on the jeep, suddenly thought the whole performance so funny that he burst into laughter and laughed until he didn't make a sound, until tears ran out of his eyes and onto his belly, until he could hardly breathe, all to see Gai, the sole support of eleven people, the great hunter and provider, treading on top of a straw pile to chase away a mouse.

Gai was a little abashed and he stopped treading, but he did put his hand into the nest and pulled out the mouse's bed, a little ball of finer grass mixed with the mouse's own fur. Gai pulled it apart to show how it was made. We saw the mouse again when Witabe poked it out of the hole with a stick, but it ran back in at once, this time for good, so we went on, leaving the mouse with his home in a shambles and his soft bed gone.

We got back to camp late in the afternoon, and Tsetchwe⁸⁵⁴ was so glad to see us that she threw her arms around me and held up her baby for me to kiss. She and I were the only young women for miles around, so there was a bond between us. She often gave me her baby to mind—not an easy job because Nhwakwe was as innocent as he was bold, and I had once taken him from under the wheels of a truck that was about to move. I had carried him to the werf for safety, but he hadn't stayed long; in a short time we had seen the grass moving at the edge of camp and Nhwakwe had appeared once more, this time dragging a toy, having walked the long distance all by himself and having navigated purely by a sense of direction, for the thick grass was high above his head.

Tsetchwe did not kiss her husband or even greet him, as⁵⁷⁶ Bushmen are accustomed to short absences from each other⁵⁹³ and it is not the custom for men and women to kiss. They

576 show affection openly only to people of the same sex and
593 to their children. Tsetchwe looked at Gai, though, and she
smiled.

124 Twikwe greeted us by smiling her wry smile and saying:
825 "So."

262 The springbok was thrown to the ground, but before it
could go into the pot, Bill Donnellan, the doctor, came over
to the werf to dissect it, this being an opportunity to find
what the Bushmen thought about the systems of the body
and what they knew about anatomy.

Gai agreed to tell what he knew, so the springbok was
dragged to a sandy spot and a small fire was built—just two
crossed sticks with one or two coals and a tiny flame, yet it
warmed us, as the evening was becoming very cold. All the
people sat around to watch as Bill opened the belly of the
springbok and rolled it onto its back. He pointed to the dia-
phragm and asked what it was. Gai told him the name.
"What is it for?" Bill asked.

"We eat it."

"Is it for anything else?"

"We don't know. We just eat it."

"What about the liver?"

"We eat the liver."

"Does the liver do anything for the springbok?"

"It stays there and then we kill him and eat it."

"And what about the stomach?"

"We Bushmen eat the stomach, too, and all the things in
the springbok."

"Doesn't the stomach do anything for the springbok?"

"Yes, he eats grass which goes in there and makes him fat,
and then we eat the fat."

124 Unwilling to give up easily, Bill passed on to the urogenital
825 system, which is, after all, exterior and which anyone should

857 The game represents ostriches, perhaps ostriches fighting or
526 mating.
535

The game was intoxicating. The boys danced so fast, so perfectly, and made their rhythm so vigorous and free, that Gai, who had been sitting quietly listening to Ukwane, could stand it no longer. Throwing his great cape around himself, he suddenly leaped to his feet and sprang among the little boys, scattering them like a hawk among sparrows, towering over their heads as he began to dance. He stamped, bent, straightened, and swung his long leg over the little boys' backs, dancing with far more abandon, not as precisely as they, but madly; he took our breath away.

He wore his great kaross backward, flung across his chest, and when he stood still waiting for his turn to leap forward and crouch he was as motionless and dignified as a tribune standing, and when he danced the great wings of his kaross swung like the cape of a bullfighter, masculine, open, and free. He was a wonderful sight, and the old people watching him smiled, and the little boys dancing under his long legs and under the wings of his cape looked up at him and laughed with pleasure because he was playing their game.

Gai was a man of great dignity and for him the dance was not altogether a success, for when the young boys tried to swing their legs over his back they generally kicked him in the rear or in the face. Soon he tired of it and came back to the fire to sit by Ukwane, but he was too excited to stay

524 quiet long and in a moment he tore off his cape and, calling
593 Ukwane and his oldest son, he began another rhythmic game,
533 called "Karos." This is played by several men or boys who rub the kaross between their hands in the way that they rub it to soften or cure it, only they rub more vigorously and accompany themselves with several very rhythmic, very gay, fast songs, sung in falsetto, to imitate the falsetto singing of

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959

FX10 Bushmen FX10
Gikwe

The Fire

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women because, say the men, women's voices are admirably beautiful. 533

Twikwe and Tsetchwe sat side by side, their legs straight [516] out in front of them, the soles of their feet lit by the fire. 535 They sang gaily and clapped their hands while the baby 562 Nhwakwe walked up and down on Tsetchwe's leg, balancing himself like a child who is walking on a railing, then climbed to her shoulder and stood there triumphantly without holding on, gazing around like a child on a hill. He looked utterly astonished when Tsetchwe suddenly swept him to the ground and, flinging off her cape, jumped to her feet and began to dance. Everyone was astonished. Women almost never dance, although they are quite welcome to, but least of all Tsetchwe, a very conscientious mother and wife.

Tsetchwe's dance was extremely lively and extremely gay, and everyone except Nhwakwe looked up at her happily. She sang and waved her arms with great abandon, and danced her gay dance right behind the men, just for once flinging motherhood to the four winds and dancing right over her baby, who came trotting sadly after her, holding up his arms to be carried. In a moment the baby gave up and went to the lap of his grandmother, frowning as his mother danced happily by him again. When Tsetchwe finally got tired and flung herself down on the ground he ran to her and nursed immediately to reassure himself. She held him loosely in one arm as she coughed from exertion and laughed, with a pleased, shy expression on her face that said: this is what I used to do when I was younger.

When the people were tired of dancing they still seemed 821 to feel like talking, and as the moon was down and the stars showed clearly we asked Ukwane to tell us something about the sky, and we pointed to several stars to learn their names.

Gai and Ukwane

85

cause his wife's mother was born there, as well as at his own⁴²³
 birthplace, the Okwa Omaramba, where we had found the⁶²¹
 eighteen Bushmen, who after all were not strangers but⁶⁰²
 closely related to Gai and Ukwane and an extension of Uk-¹⁵⁹
 wane's band.

Ukwane himself had had three wives, and he and his first⁵⁸⁶
 wife had been divorced, which Bushmen do by announcing⁵⁸⁷
 the divorce and separating. There is no ceremony connected¹⁵⁹
 with divorce, and no difficulty, as there is no ceremony con-
 nected with any marriage but the first. After a divorce a Bush-
 man man may take up residence with another woman whom
 he prefers.

Without the visible evidence of ceremonies, however, it⁸³⁷
 is hard for non-Bushmen to recognize what is happening, as¹⁵⁹
 occasionally Bushmen live together for short periods without
 being married, or commit adultery. But in cases such as these
 there is someone who does not want the union to be per-
 manent, either the man or the woman, or perhaps his or her
 children; perhaps even the man and woman are tabu rela-
 tives, and unless everyone concerned is more or less in accord,
 the union does not take place. Among Bushmen, incest and^[684]
 adultery are strongly condemned.

Once, among Kung Bushmen we lived with, a woman ran⁸³⁷
 away from her husband to take up with another man. She⁵⁹³
 had considered marrying him, and they ran off one night to
 his family to live permanently. When her husband found out,
 he got so wildly angry, taking up his spear and sharpening it,^[578]
 that the headman of the band set off after the elopers to pre-
 serve the peace. My brother and I went with him, and at
 noon we found the lovers resting in the shade.

The headman talked with the elopers and told them how
 they were bringing shame on both their families, and how
 the woman's husband was violently upset. By this time the

837 woman had begun to regret her act, and as her children,
593 whom she had brought with her, were crying for their father, she agreed to return. She then explained her reason for leaving; her husband, who had until recently been a serf Bushman, could not hunt well and was not able to clothe her. She was a handsome woman, but her kaross showed that what she said was true—the only garment that she had had to wear on the day of her elopement was tattered and old. She also explained how she and her lover had passed the night, she sleeping on one side of the fire, he on the other, with the children between. She put straws on the ground, a straw for each person, to show how it was, and we believed her.

The whole affair seemed to center itself around raiment, for though the woman was poorly dressed with what her husband had given her, the beads and ornaments that she had made for herself were fine and white. Her children, too, were poorly clothed with leather, but they also wore white beads, and her lover, the man who had attracted her so much that she committed an unconscionable act, was dressed beautifully in a soft new leather loincloth, sewed finely and worked with white beads. I myself was adorned with the story, for when we came upon the spot where the lovers were resting I found that I had a pen but no paper and so wrote everything that happened on my arms and legs.

When we got home, the woman's husband took her back and was very glad to have her. No one ever mentioned the affair again.

586 In the same band there was another man, about forty years
595 old, who took a beautiful young girl not yet twenty as his second wife. His first wife, also forty and the mother of three, was very jealous and bothered the beautiful girl until the girl, who did not love the husband anyway, ran away from

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959

FX10 Bushmen FX10

Gikwe

Kung

Gai and Ukwane

87

him and back to her parents. The husband was enraged and set off after her, but when he finally found her his anger had been replaced by longing and he pleaded with her, reasoned with her parents, and plied them with the meat of an entire eland he had shot, asking for her to return. But she would not, her parents would not make her, and finally she drove him away with these words: "I don't want an old husband like you, you man with a big black belly."

Thereafter, the marriage was recognized by everyone as dissolved. The husband was sadly disappointed, but the two women, at least, were pleased.

Both Kung and Gikwe Bushmen permit divorce, condemn adultery. We saw very little marital strife among the Kung with whom we lived for over a year, and none among the Gikwe. Even so, many Bushmen over thirty years old in both groups had previously been widowed or divorced. Death and strife take too many people; a Bushman cannot really expect his first marriage to last him all his life.

Ukwane's second wife had been a widow, the mother of Twikwe, and when that woman had died Twikwe had lived on with Ukwane. His third wife was Kutera, and their only living child was Gaiamakwe. Ukwane had another son still living at Chukudu, the Bakalahari settlement, who was surely one of the Bushmen servants in that long procession of Bakalahari villagers we had seen moving to winter quarters. We told Ukwane about this migration and Ukwane said he was sorry to hear it because he had hoped very much to see his son again before he died and many seasons might pass now before the son would come.

Kutera herself had been married twice before, once to a Bakalahari, once to a Bushman named Gainaho, and last to Ukwane, to whom she had been married about fifteen years.

Gai and Ukwane

89

thought that he would have to wait at least four years more⁵⁸² for her, he would get into such a passion of desire that he would have to send his wife away for a time, lest he forget himself and break one of the most stringent rules. Bushmen^[833 834] believe that it harms a girl terribly to be possessed before she is mature. It might even drive her mad.

Bushmen have no real solution for this problem, as there⁵⁴⁸ are no prostitutes and only in a few bands are there promiscu-⁵⁸⁸ous women. Homosexuality is not permitted either; the⁸³⁸ young men just have to get used to being tempted constantly but never gratified.

Gai had raised his young wife, and when she reached pu-⁵⁹³berty he had possessed her and she had borne him a son. This⁵⁸⁷ was the young man Gai had found at Okwa. Shortly after that his young wife had died and Gai then had married Tsetchwe, whose young fiancé had been taken away by a farmer to work on a farm. Gai and Tsetchwe had borne two children. Only one was still alive; this was Nhwakwe.

When we asked about the residence and about the parents¹⁵⁹ of Gai, an argument arose. Gai lived with Ukwane because his wife wanted to live with her mother, Dasina, and Dasina lived with Ukwane because she and Ukwane were relatives, sharing a common grandparent. Gai himself, said Ukwane, was conceived by a Bushman mother and a Bushman father named Gwena, but Gwena had died while Gai was still in the womb. When that had happened, Gai's mother had gone^[582] to Chukudu to marry a Bakalahari man. She and the Bakalahari had then moved to the big rock in the Okwa Omaramba, where Gai was born. This was Ukwane's side of the story.

Gai had been listening, and when Ukwane had finished, Gai raised himself up on his elbow to say that Ukwane was¹⁵⁹ quite mistaken, for the Bakalahari was his real father. An argument dragged on, the old people insisting that Ukwane was

Peoples of the Veld and Sky

157

everyone was thankful that she had not been hurt. The people⁷³¹ remarked at the size and the intensity of the fire and shook their heads at the destruction, each one telling someone else where he had been when he first had seen the blaze. They asked each other why no one put the fire out, as no one did, and soon the scherm was a heap of white ash and the old couple who owned it ruined materially, too old to start again.

A few weeks after that, two children were married. The⁵⁸² groom was about sixteen and the bride was eight. It was con-⁸³⁵sidered to be an excellent match, as the bride was pretty and the groom was already becoming famous as a hunter. But even in these auspicious circumstances complications and involved negotiations arose, until, for a while, people began to think that no wedding would take place. The bride's aunt^[578] disliked the groom's mother, and recalled an old scandal that had shadowed the family for years. The groom's mother had divorced the groom's father long ago to marry her present husband, which in itself was altogether usual, but it came out that the man and woman had maintained an adulterous relationship before the divorce and furthermore were tabu relatives, which made their union incestuous—not as severely so as marriage between parent and child or brother and sister, but incestuous nevertheless—and it caused a scandal that reverberated throughout all of Nyae Nyae. The two were middle-aged when they married, and they had clung sol-^[593]idly together through the storm of scandal and disapproval, for it was truly a marriage of love.

The little girl did not want to be a bride. When we asked⁵⁸⁴ her how she felt about her wedding she hid her face in her hands and said that she was still a young child, too young to get married.

All in all, only the groom's family behaved well, showing patience and forbearance until at last the wedding took place.

Beautiful Ungka and Lazy Kwi

169

she was getting older every day and already developing a reputation for shrewishness, but Beautiful Ungka flatly refused. When her admirer heard of this he felt he could not live without her and he asked his wife to kidnap her for him, but his wife, far older than Beautiful Ungka and quite possibly jealous, would not, so nothing remained for her admirer but to kidnap her himself. This he did, planning carefully, and one night when everybody was asleep he stole quietly to Beautiful Ungka's scherm, lifted her bodily from the side of her grandmother, and bore her away on his shoulder. The grandmother awoke and set up an outcry; but Beautiful Ungka, a girl of remarkable self-possession and composure, didn't kick or struggle because she knew she wouldn't stay with her captor long. When her kidnapper reached home, masculine and forceful, he flung Beautiful Ungka down in the back of his scherm on the far side of his wife "to show," said the Bushmen, "that he wasn't afraid of his wife or anybody," and Beautiful Ungka lay still, as if subdued, until she heard that her captor and his wife were asleep. Then she got up, stepped over them, and walked home. That was the end of that episode.

Every day she became more beautiful. Her parents tried hard to marry her to a steady young man, and as she would have none of her suitors, they chose a second husband for her, this time a young and presentable man in his twenties who had quite a number of worldly goods got by working at Gam for the Chuanas. So Beautiful Ungka, now fourteen, was married again. By now she had menstruated and was old enough for intercourse, but although she lived with her young husband she wouldn't let him touch her and he was driven to despair. He did everything for her, requiring no work from her at all—his relatives helped feed him—and once he walked forty miles, from Gam, where he was living, to

159 593 Gautscha, where we were, to ask for medicines from us that would relieve headaches that Beautiful Ungka had, then forty miles back again to bring her what we gave him. And yet she would not love him; she told him the medicines didn't help her at all (which was probably true) and she asked to go back to her parents. But her parents, wanting her to try harder to stay married, wouldn't rescue her, and her husband was pleased. After that her husband borrowed a donkey from the Chuanas to bring her to us at Gautscha, hoping that we could cure her with pills, not of her headaches but of her moods. She rode all the way while he walked leading the donkey, and when they arrived she said she would not live with him but with others of her relatives instead. Public opinion prevailed in this case and Beautiful Ungka was finally forced to stay with him. While he went the forty miles back to Gam to return the donkey, Beautiful Ungka got a relative of hers to build a scherm for them, and when her husband came back they lived in it together.

One night in this scherm, when Beautiful Ungka's husband was sleeping and she was lying reluctantly beside him, he must have dreamed of her, for he tried to possess her in his sleep. Beautiful Ungka, malicious girl that she was, sprang from her bed and rushed about the werf in the darkness screaming as loud as she was able, calling him dirty and filthy and at the same time telling all the startled people what had taken place. Her husband was ridiculed for days, and Beautiful Ungka used the event as an excuse to separate, for shortly after that her parents came to live with her, saddened and defeated, and her husband was sent away. But the young man loved her still and would walk miles to visit her, for they were still married, only to be sent back wherever he had come from as soon as he arrived.

159 All that can be said is that she was extremely handsome.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959

FX10 Bushmen FX10



593
142
291
516

Crooked Kwi and his wife, who once had run away from him.
Dikai made a bow from a branch, an arrow from
a reed, and gave them to her younger son.



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[p. 176(C)]

Toma the Leader

185

people thought of her, she didn't leave her fire at night to go¹⁵⁹ visiting, even to the scherm right next to hers. Rather, if she⁵⁷⁷ had something to say, she would shout it across the werf.

Her deference to appearances and public opinion seemed¹⁵⁹ to make up for her faults, for she was considered to be al-¹⁵⁷ most a model personality in spite of her extremely jealous⁵⁹³ and vindictive moods which caused her to accuse others, quite unreasonably, of selfishness, greed, and other such things. Her husband and sons were not excepted, but this was something that Toma had learned to ignore. He would simply shrug his shoulders if she railed at him, pretend he didn't hear if she railed at others.

When she didn't assault her family with her tongue she¹⁵⁹ sometimes harmed them actively. Very often she would lie⁵⁹³ sullen with narrowed eyes in front of her scherm watching the other women walk out to the veld in the morning on their way to dig veld food, and on these days her husband and sons would eat nothing unless, driven by hunger, they went to the veld themselves, the three of them together, to dig up a few roots and eat them raw. Tu herself did not experience hunger as a result of these moods, for she would have saved herself a morsel from the day before. It was her right to do this: among Bushmen every root is owned by its digger and is shared only at its owner's wish.

Toma might ask but would never command Tu to feed her family, for as he had learned to ignore her biting tongue he had learned to accept her moods. This was his way, appeasing her, and because Toma wanted peace perhaps as much as he wanted Tu, he pampered her.

This was not always so. One day gossiping people told us¹⁵⁹ that early in their marriage Toma shot a fat kudu and Tu⁵⁷⁸ said: "Don't cook all the meat because my mother will be⁵⁹³ coming to visit us."

159 Toma remarked that the meat was there for any use, but
 578 Tu misunderstood him and, thinking that he denied meat to
 • 593 her and to her mother, she flew into a rage, attacked Toma,
 152 and gave him a nasty bite on his arm. Toma lost his temper
 entirely and pinched her cheeks together until his fingers met
 in her mouth. His anger had come now, the people said, and
 he threw her into the fire, saying: "She is a woman. Why
 does she make me so angry? Shall I take a stick?"

A small crowd had gathered, and, as usual, the family quar-
 rel became a public affair. Several people helped Tu out of the
 fire, found her barely scorched, but her cousin seized Toma
 and began to shake him. This enraged Toma so much that he
 caught the cousin around the waist and threw him into the
 onlooking crowd. The people said: "We must stop Toma be-
 cause if he is so angry he may kill someone," and with that
 they led the cousin out of Toma's sight.

Toma shouted after: "If you do that again, we will get our
 arrows and fight to the death. Stop here. I am very angry. Do
 not make me more angry."

One of the men who had helped Tu said to the cousin: "I
 took his wife from the fire. You, her cousin, almost got killed
 for the way you went at Toma. If you want to help people,
 don't get angry with them. Keep calm. Don't increase anger
 as you did with Toma." With these sage words the incident
 was over.

159 The people said: "After that everyone knew how angry
 593 Toma could be, so from that day on he never had another
 fight." Everyone honored and respected him, everyone except
 his wife.

But Tu had certain redeeming qualities. When she was in
 a good mood she was charming. She would smile at everyone,
 speak in a light voice instead of the low, menacing voice that

Toma the Leader

187

she used when she was angry, a cat growling, and would be¹⁵⁹ affectionate to Toma and her sons. Very often, when she was⁵⁹³ happy, she would dance a light, short dance to a song that she sang herself. ●

Tu had borne four children, four sons, to Toma, but the¹⁶³ first two sons had died. One of these had died at birth, "had died in the veld without a name," said Toma. The oldest living children, born after the others were dead, were a boy of about eight years old and a boy of five. While we were there in 1953, Tu bore her first daughter, a strawberry of a baby⁵⁵³ who was named for two people—named first for Toma's sis-¹²³ter, but also Norna for my mother; her name is Lorna, but Bushmen have trouble with the *l*. In order to fit us into their society, the Bushmen had given us names and niches in the kinship of Toma's family. My father was named for Toma's father, my mother was named for Toma's mother, my brother was named Toma for Toma, and I was called Dikai for Tu's sister. Toma therefore named his daughter for the person who was named for his mother—not at all unusual, as it often happens that a child may bear the names of two of its relations.

Now, hoping to find Toma once again, we started the truck³⁶¹ motors, fired a rifle, called and called, in case he might be living far from the water, but no sound came from the great veld to answer us and we began to search in the bush around the pan for signs that might show us where he was. We found two empty scherms built in the rainy season, their grass thatches gray with weather, their little piles of fire ashes sunk into the ground, and near these scherms we found the skull of a bird and the shoulder blade of an antelope, all white, bleached, and dry. Farther on we saw a tree where the woven grass nests of weaver birds were hanging empty, swinging

361 with the wind, which made us think of the empty scherms, and still farther we found one more empty dwelling, the tiny grass nest of a mouse that hung on a bush, from a thorn.

We went around and around the pan in three huge circles, occasionally calling Toma's name, and when at last we were sure that no one was there we went back to the pan and sat in the shade of some bushes to think. Lazy Kwi sat with his chin in his hands, gazing into the sunlit veld. He was sure, he said, that no one lived at Gautscha Pan, so there was no use going there. Toma and his family had not lived at Nama for a whole season and since wind and rain had erased all traces of their passing we could not tell where they had gone. Lazy Kwi thought for a long time and at last he said that he had heard from the Bantu people at Gam that Toma had been indentured by Bantu people at another cattle post called Kai Kai, near Gam, and had been set to work minding a herd of goats. Lazy Kwi had not believed that this could have happened, but now he said that it was possible and in that case Toma would have to live not far from Kai Kai, somewhere in the veld but not too far from water. And there was such a place, said Lazy Kwi, but in the east and far from Nama Pan.

It was early afternoon, so hot that even the insects of the veld were silent. We decided to leave at once in order to reach the waterhole that Lazy Kwi had mentioned before night. We put a little meat, some water, and our blankets in the jeep, and my brother and I, Lazy Kwi and Ledimo, the interpreter, got ready to go, leaving the others to make a camp.

855 Before we left, Lazy Kwi took leave of his family, then got
 ● 593 his bag of tsi beans and baobab seeds from his wife and put a handful or two into another bag which he would take with him, leaving the larger share with her. When his little son saw what he was doing and realized that his father was preparing

Toma the Leader

189

to go, he began to cry, saying: "Father, Father," and when⁸⁵⁵
Lazy Kwi hesitated a moment, then said he was going any-⁵⁹³ way, the little boy picked up a handful of stones and threw one at him. This amused Lazy Kwi's wife, who smiled and tried halfheartedly to take the stones away, but it angered Lazy Kwi, who caught his son by the arm and boxed his ears. ^[861] That made the little boy so furious that he had a tantrum; he screamed and cried and arched his back to draw away from his mother, who tried to pick him up, both mother and child doing exactly what they had done when the little boy was a baby and no doubt had been doing ever since. His mother always did have a terrible time managing him, and he was still ^[862] nursing although he was now five or six years old. Before his father left, his mother had managed to mollify him somewhat, and she sat on the ground, letting him sit on her leg to nurse. He drank from one breast and held the other in his hand as he glared over his mother's shoulder at his father, who was already in the jeep.

We drove all afternoon, going fast because the ground was ¹³³ hard and not too bumpy, and the plains of Nyae Nyae seemed even longer, even wider than the plains of Ai a ha'o, being more slanted. We saw the Aha Mountains, a series of large rock outcrops quite separate from each other, blunt-ended like drumlins, which the Bushmen call "The Knife's Back." They appeared on the horizon shortly after we left Nama, distant and blue over the yellow veld, so surprising to see in that flat country that we stopped to look at them. They seemed so misty and far, so infinitely alluring, that we longed to go there. When we drove on, they stayed as relatively fixed as the moon would, which showed how far away they were. Lazy Kwi said that once on a clear day he had seen them from the top of the Gautscha baobab.

We reached the waterhole at the end of the afternoon, a

¹⁵⁹
²²⁴ scrambled for the safety of their companions, by now quite
¹⁵⁷ far away.

The hunters, victorious in this battle of nerves, had the bull wildebeest all to themselves, but now found that they could not approach it either. Having fended off the lions (it thought), it now tried to lunge to its feet to fend off the men. Short Kwi borrowed the spear from its owner and hurled it into the wildebeest's neck, where it stuck fast. Now they had no weapon at all. Their arrows would be useless. The sticks and stones they threw at the spear did not dislodge it and all their efforts to retrieve it by creeping up on the wildebeest from behind did not succeed, for as soon as one of them would edge near enough to touch the spear the wildebeest would toss its horns so quickly that the man would have to jump back, grazed. At last, while one of the men distracted the wildebeest from the front, Short Kwi backed off and rushed at it, jumped over it, and, as he passed over its back, jerked the spear free. The bull lunged and the curved horns hooked upward, but too late. Short Kwi was gone. Wanting a picture, John asked Short Kwi to do it again, but Short Kwi shook his head. "This time he will remember," Short Kwi said, and dispatched the bull by hurling the spear into its throat.

¹⁵⁹
²²⁴
● ⁵⁹³
⁸²³ Sometimes, as on these occasions, Short Kwi hunted with others, but mostly he hunted alone. He knew every bush and stone in the area of thousands of square miles that he ranged over, and he lived for hunting. Caring more for this, his passion, than for society, he often hunted as he did when we had first heard of him, alone in the veld with only his wife—a young woman who was intelligent and gay and almost pretty, to whom Short Kwi was devoted—his baby daughter, and his mother-in-law.

Toma the Leader

203

We had met him for the first time at Gautscha. He had¹⁵⁹
come in from the veld one night to visit his brother, and we²²⁴
had met him in the morning. Short Kwi was a young, small
man, shorter than his wife and so slender that he looked al-
most like a child. With long, light feet that took him every-
where, with heavy thighs but light calves like the thin shanks^[142]
of a greyhound, and with a narrow, deep chest and lungs that
never winded, he was obviously built for hunting. In the rainy
season when the veld was soft and muddy he often hunted
with only a spear and ran the great antelopes down, for
though their hooves sunk and split in the mud, causing them
eventually to tire, Short Kwi never tired and his strong legs
bore him after them relentlessly, sweeping him down the long
plains like a wind of death.

His life in the veld seemed lonely, but I doubt that it was;
he had his wife, who adored him, for company in the eve-
nings, and although she may have missed companionship
more than he did, they were both shy, both quiet, and it may^[593]
be that they both enjoyed their life apart. Short Kwi hunted
most of the time. He would hunt on and on and when word
would reach the large band of his wife's family that he had
killed, the band would go out to where the animal was, dry
the meat, and eat it. When there was enough meat Short
Kwi would rest, would relax in the sun, would talk with his
wife or make himself a new skin bag or garment, and when
word would reach him that all the meat was gone he would
move again. The men of his wife's family hunted too, of
course, but never as successfully as he, yet his great ability set^[578]
him so far apart from ordinary mortals that for once the⁵⁵⁴
Bushmen forgot their jealousy and agreed that he was the
best hunter the Kalahari had ever known.

It is a custom among Bushman hunters to cut strips of skin³⁰¹
²²⁴

The Grove

207

the people who crowded her in, and, clambering out of the jeep, ran back to retrieve it. It was an enormous bundle, but she dragged it to the jeep and tried to stuff it in, paying no attention at all to the others who insisted loudly that there was no room. She finally got it in, climbed in after it, and sat on it to squash it down. She completely ignored a lofty glance from her husband, a reproach for her impoliteness, and searched through her clothing for her pipe and her flint, with which she struck a light and smoked. In a sense, she and Toma were mismated, for the idea that she would have fewer things, less conveniences than someone else seemed to haunt Tu, while Toma seemed possessed with the fear that he would have more. When Tu took, Toma gave away.

We drove down the plain, leaving the nests in the forest behind ourselves forever, toward the eastern horizon, which was blue and shimmering in the heat of the late afternoon. We were too crowded and too jostled to talk much, everyone preferring to crouch quietly and ignore discomfort, except Tu, higher than the others on her bag of grass, who seemed very cheerful indeed and talked on and on. We stopped several times along the way—in fact, we had hardly started before Tu plucked at John's shoulder and asked him to wait. She had seen a gemsbok cucumber growing on a vine in the grass and wanted to pick it, so John stopped the jeep. Tu climbed out and found several, which she tossed in, letting them roll about freely on the floor. We were about to start again when Dikai also saw some cucumbers and we had to wait while she gathered those, and no sooner had we driven on again, the little cucumbers rolling against our ankles and prickling us with their spines, than Little Dabe vomited and we had to wait a third time while Dikai cleaned him up with a tuft of grass.

Toma sighed. Men plan to spend several days traveling

lap and looked drowsily at her father. "Ehe," said Toma,⁵²¹ pointing at her, pleased that she still remembered her European name.

The talk returned to food and hunting and Toma remembered an eland the people had eaten which Short Kwi had killed, and this reminded everyone of the puff-adder bite, and Gao Feet, who had seen Short Kwi, began to describe the wound. He stammered and repeated whole phrases again and again, but finally he finished and those who had not seen Short Kwi drew in their breath and seemed very depressed. Short Kwi had been sick a year and had not died, but the flesh had gone from the calf of his leg, said Gao, the skin had gone from his foot, his foot was curled and the bones were showing. The wound stank, too, said Gao, and at this Tu said she didn't think she could bear to see him. Her children were asleep around her and she looked very sad, but by now all the faces lit by the fire were depressed and sad, and soon after that people began to go home, carrying their sleeping children. The night was almost over, the Southern Cross lay on its side and the Firewood Star was high over our heads. Last to leave was the old woman, Dikai's mother, who got stiffly to her feet and waved good-night to us.

"Good night, Old Grandmother," I said.

[608]

She turned her head to face me. "You should call me Mother. I embraced you when you came," she said.

Quite far away a fire at the werf flared up, the center point⁵²³ between two tall trees whose branches formed a delicate, pointed arch lit from below, showing the fire's brown owner sitting with his back to us, his elbows on his knees, perhaps gazing into the flames. It was Crooked Kwi, and he seemed very small beneath the high trees but very bright in the firelight and, somehow, very important. In a moment his wife walked into the firelight and sat beside him and they sat to-

- 593 together without speaking and then his wife lay down and he lay down and their fire began to die. Soon all the werf was dark.

513 In the morning, in the salmon dawn, the first light, we woke up to find doves singing and a fresh, warm wind blowing. It was easy to sleep now, and the people slept for hours, rolling away from their piles of ashes as the day warmed, until they lay curled or sprawled in all parts of the werf with Toma's son, by chance, asleep in the center, flat on his belly with his head in the curve of his arm, relaxed and strong and breathing deeply.

222 At noon the adults began to get up. The women went into the forest behind their werf for sticks to burn and a few roots [252] to eat, and when they had built up their fires they roasted the roots and shared them with their families. Toma said that we would go back to Nama Pan right away, but his wife and the other women wanted to gather tsi; it was very abundant right beside the forest and they hated to leave all that food just lying there. "Perhaps other people will come here and eat it," said Tu, so Toma changed his mind and everyone took bags, nets, skins, anything that could be used as a container, and they spent the afternoon gathering tsi. They got mountains of it. There was plenty in the patch that they had chosen and with all of them picking the nuts from among the round leaves of the tsi plants they filled every bag, skin, and net that they had. They gathered almost three hundred pounds. The women felt so happy that they were singing a gay, light song in three or four parts. When the people had picked all they 431 could find, when every possible bag was full, they said they were ready to go to Nama, but when we brought the jeep and began to load it they were already busy with their endless pre-occupation, that of giving and receiving, and had already

621 The other werfs were much nearer us, as the people wanted
574 to keep an eye on each other, to see that we gave food or pres-
ents to all when we gave to one, but also because they en-
joyed being together and wanted to be able to visit each other
quickly at any time at all. Next to our camp on one side
was Lazy Kwi's werf, and on the other side lived Toma with
his wife and Gao Feet with his wives. At the far end of their
werf lived Crooked Kwi with his wife and the old grand-
mother. They were between our camp and the pan, and be-
side their werf ran a pathway, the way used by the people on
the other side of us to reach the water.

- 593 On the other side of the path, in the shade of a tree, lived
one more small band, the band of a young man of perhaps
thirty, who lived with his twelve-year-old son and his eight-
[583] year-old wife, whom he was nourishing while waiting for her
to grow. These young people had chosen their spot because
[591] the little girl was Gao Feet's daughter by his first wife and
was still so young that she wanted to live near her mother.
She was a sad little girl with a grave face and troubled, won-
dering eyes; in fact, all these young people were very grave and
sad—the young man's first wife had died and he now had no
one to care for him because the little girl, his new wife, spent
a great deal of time with her mother and he was left alone.
The son was lonely too, having no mother and no one to care
for him except his sad young father. His father was too trou-
bled, too preoccupied, to be a companion to him, his little
stepmother was too young, and he spent most of his time
sitting on a rise of ground overlooking the werf where he
lived, watching other people going by.

[142] The little girl took after her mother, Gao Feet's ugly wife,
but her two men, her husband and her stepson, were a family
533 of great beauty. Both had wide, grave eyes and golden skins,
and both were musicians, but the young father himself was

Short Kwi the Hunter

235

happy. She was only ten, but already she had lost her childish belly, although her breasts had not yet begun to grow. ⁵⁸² [145]

Now everyone was in the werf and people had begun to go ⁵⁹³ back to their fires, leaving Short Kwi alone. When most people were gone, Short Kwi's brother-in-law squatted beside ⁵¹⁴ him and, taking his injured leg, began laboriously to help him ¹⁶⁴ move toward the veld, toward a little pathway that we had not noticed before. Short Kwi's wife had cleared the path; it led to a place in the veld where Short Kwi could urinate, and slowly, painfully, Short Kwi and his brother-in-law moved down it, the brother-in-law duckwalking, carrying the bad leg while Short Kwi—he who once could run great elands down—edged himself forward on his buttocks, using his hands to brace himself and his good leg to pull himself along. ⁴³¹

We were not at his fire when he got back, but we could see ¹⁶⁴ him through the trees, inching, and then, when Short Kwi was alone with his wife and daughter, we could watch him sitting by his fire, looking idly around. He was like a wild goose with pinioned wings, squatting there before his fire, watching the sky, the veld, and other people come and go.

Those of us from Nama made a camp apart from the werf, ³⁶¹ through long grass as high as our chests, inside a little glade ⁵²¹ of thorn trees. We cleared some of the grass and built a fire, and even then the Bushmen could not stop talking about Short Kwi, although they tried to change the subject; they spoke of him creeping along on his buttocks, even this impossible without someone to help, and all because he had failed to notice an adder that was waiting in his path. Of course, the Bushmen said, he was lucky to be alive. I felt that he was luckier than they supposed, because of his wife, that ⁵⁹³ quiet, gracious, gentle, pretty woman, and his grave little daughter, the image of her mother. The people felt, said

- 593 Toma, that Short Kwi's wife would leave him now for a better man, but she had not and was not going to. He was, after all, the same husband, only sadder.

Later in the night we went back to talk with Short Kwi once more, to tell him that we thought he could be helped to walk again, but not that we thought his leg would have to come off, for we did not want to frighten him. Our plan was to drive him to Windhoek, the capital of South-West Africa, where he could go to a hospital and perhaps be fitted with an artificial leg. We planned eventually to tell him this, but gradually. The long grass was wet with dew when we pushed through it this time, and we were drenched. Short Kwi was still sitting where we had seen him, still beside his wife, not speaking. When we asked him if he would come with us because we believed he could be helped, he smiled such a heart-breaking smile of pure happiness that we felt sickened because we knew what he thought. His wife looked at him and smiled and then they both looked up at us and their smiles faded and their faces fell and I think that when they saw us they knew we couldn't restore his leg to him.

- 151 Early in the morning when the sky became light, misty yellow—for the sun was still swallowed by smoke—we broke camp and made a comfortable bed for Short Kwi on top of the truck, then went to the werf to get him. He and his brother-in-law were just creeping back on the path from the veld, but Short Kwi's belongings were ready, tied up in bundles by his wife. We waited a long time while Short Kwi made his way toward us, sweat standing out on his forehead although the air was cool, but, oddly, even his slow and painful creeping seemed graceful. It did not have the heaving awkwardness of movement that one associates with injured human beings, but rather the liquidity and co-ordination of a

152 and again Tu slapped it away. This time Norna began to
 578 cry, lonely and forlorn in front of all the people, turned on by
 her mother, and she looked very small and defenseless and
 bereft; she cried sadly, not angrily, big tears running down
 her face, her fist in her mouth, looking up at her mother with
 enormous eyes. This was Tu's chance. She snatched up
 Norna and carried her back to the werf.

It was a terrible incident for everyone. That evening Tu still
 felt her shame and when I went to the werf to visit for a mo-
 ment she took the occasion to fix me with her eyes all the way
 across the werf and tell me loudly that in the morning I
 would have to help her clear grass for another werf, for she
 was not going to "live among these people any more." Tu's
 mother, a shameless old woman, came up to me to tell me a
 joke and Tu smoldered.

Not only the adults felt a sense of tension. That evening
 Dikai, looking rather worn and tired, was sitting by her fire
 rubbing her shoulders, which usually ached, she said, when
 862 her two sons, also tired, threw themselves down each on one
 152 side of her and began to nurse, each leaning heavily against
 578 her, each at a breast. Perhaps because she was tired or per-
 593 haps because she had been about to put some tsi nuts in her
 775 fire but now could not because her sons were in the way, she
 looked down at them and mildly suggested to Little Gashe
 that perhaps he could bring himself to stop nursing alto-
 gether, being old enough now. Little Gashe did not take
 this kindly at all. He looked up at her, then took his mouth
 from her nipple and cursed her with a formal, deadly curse.
 "May the spirit of Niša, who is dead," he said, "take you by
 the throat and choke you." He then took the nipple back in
 his mouth and sucked on, thoughtfully.

152 I could hardly believe my ears. Children are expected not
 578 to curse their parents, but, worst of all, Little Gashe had in-
 593
 775

The Sun Dance

249

voked those supposedly unmentioned beings, the spirits of ¹⁵²the dead. Dikai was not offended, though; she gazed down ⁵⁷⁸at him calmly. "You, you little thing," she said, "no curse ⁵⁹³that you could say would hurt me." ⁷⁷⁵

Much later in the evening when John and Dan and I were ⁵⁷⁴sitting at our own fire just before going to bed, Dikai and her ⁶⁰⁸nephew, Toma's son, came to visit us, Dikai with Little Dabe asleep on her back. It was a quiet evening, people were sitting at their own werfs and though they were screened from us by grass we could hear their voices talking and see the light of their fires. When Dikai came, Lazy Kwi, whose werf was on the other side of our camp, heard her speak and stood up to see what was happening, looming suddenly from where he had been sitting only a few feet away. He came through the grass to visit also, and we sat by the fire listening to Dikai as she told us about various relatives in the north and what kinship terms we should use for them, I being named for her and John for Toma. Lazy Kwi told Dan that Dan had been named for him, but named Kwi Cheeks instead of Lazy Kwi, and when Dan asked why his nickname was Cheeks all Lazy Kwi could say was: "Because of your cheeks." We thought, but we could not think of a reason, as there was nothing about Dan's cheeks that might attract attention, except that he had recently shaved his beard so that his cheeks were visible.

Dan said that now he had no beard, no hair, no name, which Lazy Kwi thought was terribly funny and said: "Throw away your beard hairs, throw away your name, but take Kwi instead and be my namesake." Shortly after that we went to bed. Relations seemed less strained.

One morning about a week after Short Kwi had gone, when ⁷³²the people were resting and the werf was quiet, we heard a

196 woman calls her brothers-in-law by words formed from this root,
601 but not her sisters-in-law; whereas a man does the opposite. The result is, that anyone calling a connexion *tah̄* is called *tah̄* by that person. Other connexions are called *twi*, a word which seems to mean "to tie", "to net", as *twihibā* "a riempi net", or "string bag". A woman calls both parents-in-law and son- and daughter-in-law *twi*, but a man calls his wife's parents simply "father" and "mother". I think he calls his son- and daughter-in-law *twi*, but have no clear examples.

591 Women are said to leave their own home on marriage, and to be taken to the husband's home. But in a few months, when the wife has settled down, it is customary for the young couple to return to her parents' home and stay there till the first child is about a year old, so that the girl may have her mother's help and advice. Sometimes the son-in-law settles altogether with his wife's people, but not always. In fact, the Naron all say that a man must settle at his father's place, though they do not always do so. This does not explain why a man calls his wife's parents "father" and "mother".

606 A man is supposed not to speak to his mother-in-law, nor a woman to her father-in-law. Of the former I had personal evidence: my Bushman kitchen boy would not enter a room in which his mother-in-law happened to be. As to not speaking, I think that means more—not sitting near, not consorting with a person, rather than never addressing him. A Naron granny gave me a vivid description of the family settling the name of a new-born child. The relations present all quarrel over it: the father says, he wants the little girl called after one of his people, but the mother's mother tells him that is not at all necessary, the baby is to be named after her. This shows that speech between the two is not absolutely forbidden.

183 There is a prohibition against a grown-up brother and sister
593 speaking or sitting together,—but here, too, the sitting, not the speaking, is the important part. I have heard a fully grown brother and sister addressing each other, while passing at a good distance. This rule explains why the relationship between a man and his brother's child is nearer than that with his sister's child, the former being called *uku* "son", the latter *tah̄*, a more distant term; whereas a woman calls her sister's son "son", her brother's son *tah̄*.

BUSHMAN TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

67

Brother and sister are the only relations who are forbidden to marry, and by this, real brother and sister are meant, the children of one father and mother, not cousins. I never heard a title for any cousin, however related, though several were present. Cousins sometimes marry, but more often a bride from a distance is procured.

A pair of sisters have a very close relationship. They are generally chums, and help each other with their babies. A child calls its mother's sister its "little mother". In speaking of the occasional bigamy found among the Naron in contrast to other Bushman tribes, an old man said to me:

"A man may take a second wife, if he wishes. If they agree well, they live in one hut; if not, each makes herself a hut. A man had better take his wife's younger sister as his second wife; then they do not quarrel, but live in one hut."

Uka in Ukahe "maternal aunt" may be derived from Uka "together". Ho used as a verb means "to marry", also "to give birth to children". Ti kweba and ti kwesa mean simply "my man", "my woman"; they are more often used than hoba and hosha.

A widow may marry her late husband's brother, but need not do so. She is quite at liberty to marry any other man. If she remarries, her husband is expected to look after her children; otherwise the duty falls upon their father's brother. The widow may stay near her husband's people, or return to her own people, as she pleases.

Grandparents, particularly on the mother's side, are very fond of adopting a grandchild. They will half adopt one, even during both parents' lifetime. The grandmother is generally the person who teaches a child to speak.

In concluding these notes on the tables of relationship, I should like to say that I know they are very incomplete. At the time of my stay among the Ukau Hen and Naron I had not realized the importance of this side of native life; nor apparently had my aunt, Dr. Lloyd, whose work I rely on for the Ixam and Ikun tables. Still, I think sufficient has been collected to show the general trend of Bushman family ties.

One must always remember, that people depending on nature for their entire food supply, can only exist in very small, widely scattered groups. Families cannot be large. Drought and famine

[Text continues on page 70]

222 on the season. In the long days of wilt-
461 ing between the October spring and
the January summer, food is scarce
and the women may go out every day
into the failing veld, leaving their
werk early in the morning and re-
turning late in the afternoon. All

222 that a woman gathers belongs to her
422 alone, and of course is shared with her
family. She feeds her husband, her
● 593 children and often a visitor or two, at
her own hearth. No formal instruction

222 is practiced among the !Kung, with
868 the possible exception of certain kinds
of religious teaching and what might

857 be called an occasional hunting school.
Learning to gather comes from the
children's observation of the more ex-

[584] periented women. Girls soon learn to
recognize more than a hundred kinds
of edible plants that grow in Nyae
Nyae, as well as the seasons and places
in which these plants grow. They learn
to see tiny, shriveled root vines coiled
around thorns in the thickets and, in
the process, develop fine powers of
observation. Possibly complementary
to this lack of formal instruction, no
formal pressure is exerted on young
people to take up adult roles. Girls,
if they wish, accompany their mothers
on gathering trips. If they do not, they
rarely feel guilty. A girl usually be-
[582] gins to feel responsible soon after
she marries, which is often before
puberty. But only when she has chil-
dren of her own does a woman see the
world through the eyes of a provider.

[131]

SHARING, TALKING, AND GIVING: RELIEF OF SOCIAL TENSIONS AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

LORNA MARSHALL

THIS paper describes customs, practised by the /Kung Bushmen in the Nyae Nyae region of South Africa, which help them to avoid situations that are likely to arouse ill will and hostility among individuals within the bands and between bands. Two customs which seem to be especially helpful and which I describe in detail are meat-sharing and gift-giving. I mention also the /Kung habits of talking, aspects of their good manners, their borrowing and lending, and their not stealing.¹ 121

The common human needs for co-operation and companionship are particularly apparent among the Nyae Nyae /Kung. Independent living, outside the band structure,² does not exist for individuals. Nuclear families do not live alone. The arduous hunting-gathering life would be impossible without the co-operation and companionship of a larger group. Moreover, in this society the ownership of the resources of food and water is organized through the headmen of bands, and individuals have rights to these resources by being members of a band connected to the headman by some near or remote kin or affinal bond. The /Kung are also extremely dependent emotionally on the sense of belonging and on companionship. Their need to avoid loneliness, I think, is actually visible in the way families cluster together in their werfs and in the way people sit, often touching someone else, shoulder against shoulder, ankle across ankle. Comfort and security for them lie in belonging to their group, free from hostility or rejection. 601

Their security and comfort must be achieved side by side with self-interest and much jealous watchfulness. Altruism, kindness, sympathy, or genuine generosity were not qualities which I observed often in their behaviour. However, these qualities were not entirely lacking, especially between parents and offspring, between siblings and between spouses. One mother carried her sick adult daughter on her back for three days in searing summer heat for us to give her medicine. /Naoka carried her lame son, Lame ≠Gao, for years. Gau clucked and fussed over his second wife, Khuan/a, when she was sick. When /U had a baby, her sister, Di'ai, gathered veldkos for her for five days. On the other hand, people do not generally help each other. They laugh when the lame man, Kham, falls down and do not help him up. /U's jealous eyes were like those of a viper when we gave more attention to her husband, ≠Toma, than to her because he was much more ill. And, in the extreme, there is the report from the 1958 expedition of an instance of callous indifference in one band and the probable abandonment of a dying old childless woman, an old aunt, when her sister, with whom she lived, had died. 571

Occasions when tempers have got out of control are remembered with awe. The 578

¹ This description of the /Kung in the Nyae Nyae region is based on observations made during our several expeditions between 1951 and 1959. Changes in the conditions under which the /Kung live are to be expected, and how these changes will affect the 593

practice of the customs here described we do not know.

² Lorna Marshall, '/Kung Bushmen Band Organization', *Africa*, vol. xxx, no. 4, Oct. 1960. 578

[114]

SOCIAL TENSIONS AMONG /KUNG BUSHMEN

237

of the hunting party is not a matter of convention or of anxious concern. Hunting parties are freely organized by men who like to hunt with each other. No categories of kin or affines are prohibited from hunting together, whether they have a joking relationship or not or practise the sitting and speaking taboo. Men from different bands may hunt together. 224

A father has authority over his sons and sons-in-law and could tell them to go hunting or to accompany him and would expect them to obey. In other relationships participation in a hunting party is voluntary. Any man may instigate a hunt and may ask others to join. No one is formally in command of a party, unless he is the father with his sons or sons-in-law, but often an informal kind of leadership develops out of skill and judgement and the men fall in with the plans and suggestions of the best hunter or reach agreement among themselves somehow. 273

Hunting parties are usually composed of from two to four or five men. One hunter alone is at a disadvantage. A man cannot leave the meat unguarded from lions, hyaenas, jackals, and vultures while he goes to bring help from the band to carry it nor can he carry it alone. Only occasionally are parties larger than four or five. For two parties to hunt in different directions would be more advantageous than to form a larger single party.

When the kill is made the hunters have the prerogative of eating the liver on the spot and may eat more of the meat until their hunger is satisfied. If they are far from the band, they may eat the parts that are especially perishable or most awkward to carry, like the head, and they sometimes eat the cherished marrow. They then carry the animal to the band, either in its parts, bones and all, or, if the animal is very big, leaving most of the bones and cutting the meat into strips which dry in the sun to biltong and are more easily carried on the carrying-sticks. The blood is carried in bags made of the stomach, rumen, and bladder. 251 415

The gall bladder and testicles are discarded at the kill. Eventually the hooves are thrown away and usually the picked bones and horns. (The /Kung make only a few artifacts of bone and horn which last a long time and seldom need replacing.) Sinews are kept for making cord. The hide would be skinned off whole and tanned if it were suitable for a kaross and someone wanted a new kaross at the time. Otherwise, the hide is dried, pounded up, and eaten. Hides are quite tasty. Feet are picked of every tissue; gristle is dried and pounded. Soft parts, such as the foetus, udder, heart, lungs, brains, and blood, are often given to old people with poor teeth. Intestines are enjoyed and desired by all. The meat of the rump, back, chest, and neck is highly appreciated. Nothing is wasted; all is distributed. 321 283 281 386

The owner of the animal is the owner of the first arrow to be effectively shot into the animal so that it penetrates enough for its poison to work. That person is responsible for the distribution. The headman of the band is not the one to distribute the meat by virtue of his headmanship, unless he happens to be at the same time the owner of the arrow. The owner may or may not be one of the hunters. 400 620

Hunters have arrows which they acquire in three different ways. Each man makes arrows for himself, shaping the points (usually now of metal, but still possibly of bone or wood) with some slight distinction so that he will know them from the arrows of other men. Secondly, arrows are given as gifts. The man who made the arrow or who himself acquired it as a gift, may give it to someone else, either a man or a woman, consanguineous kin, affine, or friend. 422 244 411 491

vour it. Thus, according to our observations, a !Kung band gets on an average 224 only about fifteen to eighteen large animals in a usual year.

The meat of the large game animals does not belong to the hunters to do with as they choose. However, they always have the prerogative of eating the liver at the site of the kill and, if their hunger is not satisfied, they may eat more. The bulk of the meat is then carried to the band, where it is distributed among the members according to a system. The meat belongs to the owner of the first arrow that penetrates the animal so that it stays in. He has the responsibility of making the first distribution.

Anyone in the band may be the owner of the arrow. A hunter carries 224 arrows he acquires in three different ways. Each man has his own that he 411 makes himself, shaping the points with some little distinction so that he 422 will know them from the arrows of other men. In addition he carries 426 arrows that have been given or lent to him. When an arrow is given to him, 431 he is the owner as much as if he had made it himself, but if he uses that 571 arrow he must make a special gift of meat to the donor. When he uses an arrow that is loaned to him, he merely shoots for the person who lent it and who remains the owner of the arrow. !Kung society makes a great deal of giving and lending arrows. Women and old men, as well as men in their hunting prime, receive arrows as gifts and may give them or lend them to a hunter, asking him to shoot for them. A hunter cannot refuse an arrow— 576 as a person cannot refuse any gift—without offending the giver. He accepts the arrow and with it an obligation, but he gives or lends arrows in return and involves others in obligation to him. Hunters choose to use one or another of their arrows, with the result that the responsibility of distributing the meat, with its advantages and obligations, is shared by members of the band as is the meat itself.

In the first distribution the whole animal is divided among a few 224 persons, who receive whole sections on the bone, unless the animal is so large that the meat has to be cut off in strips to be carried. The first of these persons are the hunters, each of whom gets a fore- or hindquarter or the equivalent. The giver of the arrow (if the arrow was not made by the owner himself) receives a generous portion. The owner of the arrow, who may be one of the hunters, or anybody, keeps the rest.

In the second distribution, the several persons who got meat in the 224 first distribution cut up their shares and distribute them further. The 602 amounts depend on the number of persons involved, but should be as much as the giver can manage. In the second distribution, close kinship is the factor that sets the pattern of giving. A man's first obligation at this point 606 is to his wife's parents. He must give to them the best he has in as generous 593 portions as he can while still fulfilling other primary obligations, which are to his own parents, his spouse, and offspring. He keeps a portion for himself at this time and from it would give to his siblings, to his wife's siblings, if

LORNA MARSHALL

259

Both the father and mother expect and receive respect and obedience from their children. Although the mother's influence is always felt, I believe that the father's authority is greater. It is not formalized or expressed in a harsh or domineering way. As long as the father lives, he is the head of the family, symbolically. Even when too old to hunt, if he is still a forceful person, he remains the one in authority, the leader of the sons-in-law and his daughters, of his sons and their wives. Gradually, however, when he becomes very old, the younger men make their own plans without necessarily consulting him.

!Kung families are responsible for dependents. Thus, old, dependent parents are unfailingly supported by their offspring and may choose with which one of their offspring they will live. Orphaned children are taken by their grandparents or by a sibling of their parents. It happens occasionally that a person has no living parent, offspring, or sibling. In that case, other relatives assume the responsibility.

THE NAME RELATIONSHIP • Although !Kung society has developed no formal political structure under which the bands are united, and there are no organizations outside the bands, these people have a means of extending the concept of kinship beyond close consanguineous relatives and affines and of recognizing, in what we call the name relationship, the web of remote interrelationship that long intermarriage within the region has established.

Invariably the first son and the first daughter are named by their father for their paternal grandparents. Other children are usually named for their mother's parents, the siblings of their parents, and the spouses of those siblings, and may occasionally be named for other relatives. Thus, a few names are used over and over through the generations. We recorded only forty-six men's names and forty-one women's names in the region. The !Kung assume that persons who have the same name are related, though the exact nature of the relationship is forgotten. They believe, also, that people with the same name somehow have a common entity. They bestow upon each other kin terms that are appropriate to the name, according to a system. The !Kung have intermarried within the Nyae Nyae region to such an extent that everyone has a kin term he associates with each one of the names. This means that the people of the whole region are what we call name relatives, all applying kin terms to each other.

From the !Kung point of view the custom has two values. It regulates the incest taboo in its furthestmost extension, especially the joking relationship that symbolizes the taboo. (For example, a man should not marry or make sexual jokes with a woman who has the same name as his mother.) The !Kung feel secure in righteousness when they know they are behaving

SEXUAL LIFE AND MARRIAGE 109

only to the treatment of women and their paramours; nothing is said of the wife's remedies when her husband is unfaithful. 114
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Besides this sexual relation between husband and wife, there is also the economic relation. The two share the same hut, and take their meals in common. It is the duty of the wife to build the hut, to provide the vegetable food, the firewood and water, and to cook the meals; while it is the duty of the husband to provide game for himself and his wife, to make her clothes and certain of her utensils. The economic burden of the woman has led some writers to depreciate her status, but on the whole it would seem that the women are the companions of their husbands, not their servants, and will often take their own way, in spite of the man's wishes. The position of the wife within the household is, in fact, hardly inferior to that of her husband, who, it is said, is often enough henpecked by her! 581
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In addition to establishing this special relationship between husband and wife, marriage leads also to the formation of further special relationships, especially with the parents-in-law. After marriage, as we have seen, the young couple may remain for some time with the wife's parents before finally taking up their residence in the husband's group. Among the Kung and the neighbouring tribes to the east the husband has during this period of temporary matrilocal residence to hunt for his parents-in-law and to supply them in this way with animal food. If he neglects to do this, says Vedder, his wife may be taken away from him.² We thus get a special economic relationship between a man and his wife's parents, based directly upon the fact of his marriage. Probably something similar exists among the other Bushman tribes having temporary matrilocal residence, but no concrete information is available about them in this connection. 591
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Among almost all the Bushmen, moreover, marriage further creates a special form of etiquette between a man and his parents-in-law, and in some cases between a woman and her husband's parents. Thus among the Kung the husband has to avoid his mother-in-law, the wife apparently also her father-in-law. The wife's parents do not enter the hut of the young couple, nor again may the husband enter their hut. The game which he kills for his father-in-law he lays down in front of the latter's hut.³ Similarly among the Naron a man is not 606

¹ Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, 117; Chapman, *op. cit.*, i, 291; Lebzelter, *op. cit.*, 14. For an unsympathetic account of the wife's status, cf. Hahn, "Die Buschmänner," 122.

² Vedder, *op. cit.*, 8; Chapman, *op. cit.*, i, 218.

³ Vedder, *loc. cit.*; Chapman, *loc. cit.*; D. F. Bleek, "Bushman Terms of Relationship," 63.

118 SOCIAL HABITS AND CUSTOMS

857 sleepy, and crawl on to the grass in the hut. No one sends them to bed.

- 593 So the children, during infancy and childhood, remain under the tutelage and in the care of their parents. Once they are grown up, no one really controls them. The tie between parents and mature children is simply one of respect and love, but there is no lack of family affection. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives are also respected to some extent, according to character. Among the Naron, grandparents, especially on the mother's side, take a great interest in their grandchildren, and often adopt one which has been weaned, while among the Heikum orphans are generally adopted by the maternal grandparents. The grandmother is often [597] the person who teaches a child to speak. Between two sisters there [868] is usually a close bond of affection, they are generally companions, 593 and help each other with their babies. In certain Cape Bushman tales the wife's unmarried sister is shown staying with her, as helper and nurse of the baby. On the other hand, among some of the North-Western tribes at least, there is a prohibition against a grown-up brother and sister speaking or sitting together. Here too, as in the case of the mother-in-law, the sitting and not the speaking appears to be the important part, for Miss Bleek records having heard an adult brother and sister address each other, while passing at a good distance.¹

GIRLS' PUBERTY CEREMONIES

- 881 The attainment of puberty is marked among all the Bushmen by the performance of certain ceremonies, through which the young people have to pass before being admitted to full membership of the group. Puberty ceremonies for girls are definitely found in all the [184] Bushman tribes, but corresponding ceremonies for boys appear to be restricted to the northern tribes. These ceremonies vary somewhat from tribe to tribe.

Among the Cape Bushmen a girl at the time of her first menstruation was in a state of taboo. "She is put into a tiny hut, made by her mother, with a very small aperture for the door, which her mother closes upon her. When she goes out, she looks down upon the ground; and when she returns to the hut, she sits and looks down. She does not go far, or walk about at this time. When presently she becomes a 'big girl', she is allowed to look about, and to look afar

¹ D. F. Bleek, "Bushman Terms of Relationship," 19, 66-7; cf. *idem*, *Naron*, 32; *Fourie*, "Bushman of S.W. Africa," 94.

REGULATION OF PUBLIC LIFE 151

previously noted, plays an important part in the usages relating to game shot with the bow and arrow, as well as in the first-fruits ceremony; while among the Kung he is similarly responsible for the ceremony performed before the edible bulbs of the new season may be gathered. There is no record of similar religious and economic functions being vested in the chief in other Bushman tribes, so that, in the present light of our knowledge, such customs cannot be regarded as common elements of Bushman culture; but in the tribes where they do occur they obviously show that the chief may, in fact, exercise a considerable influence in the life of the community. [622] [184]

On the whole the chief appears to be essentially a leader rather than a ruler. His actual authority over the members of his band is very slight, and dependent to a considerable extent upon his personality. If, for example, he is a man of strong character, or possesses a gun, he will have a correspondingly greater influence; but the only special authority he has is over the members of his own family, and he has no power to enforce his will outside it. He has nothing in the way of judicial functions, nor does he exercise any organized control over the members of the band. Great freedom of action prevails within the band, and as a rule every adult man can do as he pleases, provided, of course, that he does not infringe against recognized law and custom. In general the head of each family has control over the movements of his wife or wives and children—and over the latter only while they are small. No one really controls grown-up sons and daughters. [157] [593]

This absence of any organized system of public control does not imply that the Bushmen have no laws. On the contrary all their institutions, manners and customs serve to regulate the relations between the members of the band, and thus to maintain law and order. The child at birth comes into a world where there already exist definite forms of organization and behaviour, of ceremonial, of manners and fashions, and as he grows up he falls more or less unconsciously into acting and thinking like those around him, and in this way comes to conform to social norms. There are moreover more or less deliberate means of impressing upon young people the social sentiments necessary for the maintenance of the law and order of the community. The education they receive in the households of their parents and out in the veld, and above all the highly-important teachings at the puberty ceremonies for boys, instruct them in tribal lore and tradition, inculcate social norms, and determine their activities accordingly. [83] [867] [881]